



THE
ABRIDGEMENT
of the Gospell:

Or

THE ORDER AND COVRSE
of mans saluation, as it is set foorth by
ZACHARIE the father of IOHN
BAPTIST, Luke 1. 67. &c. and
further opened in ten Sermons
thereupon:

By SAM. HIERON.

I. TIM. 3. 16.

*Without controuersie, great is the mysterie of
godlinesse.*

LONDON

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yard, at the signe of the Bull-head.

ANNO 1609.

Thomas Bull.

THE
ABRIDGMENT

of the
THE ORDER AND COVENANT

of the
ZACHARIAH THE PROPHET

THE
THE

LONDON
Printed by M. B. and S. W. at the
and sold by the



TO THE READER.



Continue still (Christian Reader) to impart unto thee some of my Sermon-notes : not so much to supply thy want (God hauing so abundantly blessed this age with better helps) as to

manifest my desire of doing my vtmost good in Gods Church. Thou hast here such Obseruations as it pleased God to inable me to deliuer (in the place where I liue) vpon the song of Zacharie. In which (in my poore vnderstanding) the order and course of mans saluation is as effectually set forth, as in any other part of holy Writ. The fountaine of it is Gods mercie : the ground, Christ Iesus : the substance of the thing it selfe, Redemption from the bondage of spirituall enimies : it was anciently promised to the Fathers, and reported by the Prophets in all ages:

TO THE READER.

Knowledge of it is now giuen vnto vs by the Ministerie of man : and the end is , to leade vs by the cheerefull practise of Holinesse and Righteousnesse, to the comfortable fruition of eternall Peace. Some other points (of good vse) are occasionally handled in these Lectures , but these be the principall. The ordinarie vse of this Scripture in the Church , hath moued me (besides the particular excellency thereof, it being indeed the very Abridgement of the Gospell) to cull it out from among my other Readings vpon Luke, and to commend it to thy view.

So praying God to blesse my labour to thy vse, I commend thee heartily to his Grace. Mod-

bury in De-

uon.

Thine in the Lord,

SAM. HIERON.

THE



THE ABRIDGEMENT of the Gospell.

THE FIRST SERMON.

LUKE 1.67.&c.

*Then his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost,
and prophesied, saying : Blessed be the Lord God of
Israel, &c.*



IN this passage of speech, in which the Hymne of Zacharie is reported; two things are to be considered. 1. The Preface to it. 2. The Hymne it selfe. In the Preface againe, there are two points obserued. 1. The speciall enabling of Zacharie to this businesse. 2. The generall nature of the thing performed. The enabling of Zacharie, is in these words, *He was filled with the Holy Ghost.*

By (*the Holy Ghost*) we must not heere vnderstand the very Essence and Deity of the third person in Trinity, but the gifts and graces of the Holie Ghost, according as the word is often so taken in the Scripture^a. By being *filled with the Holy Ghost*, we must not imagine, that Zacharie till this time was destitute of the graces of the spirit; but this is the meaning, that at this time, and vpon this occasion, a more large and plentifull measure of the graces of Gods spirit appeared in him. In this we may obserue,

*The generall
diuision of
the whole
place.*

^a Ioh. 3. 34.
Ioh. 7. 39.
Rom. 8. 9.

The 1. Do-
ctrine.

^b Psal. 105. 17.
18.

^c ver. 21.

^d Ex. 2. 14. & c.

^e Job 42. 10.

^f ver. 12.

^g Psal. 110. 2.

that *Zacharie* afflicted formerly with the dumbnesse of many moneths, hath not onely the libertie of his speech restored, but being endowed with a fuller portion of Gods graces, his tooing is made the instrument of the Holie Ghost, in vutting a matter of extraordinarie consequence. From whence wee may collect this doctrine: That the comforts which GOD heapeth vpon his afflicted seruants doe come in with a kinde of aduantage; there is not onely a remoouing of the affliction, but a bestowing withall of some speciall kindnesse. *Zacharie* is not onely now not dumbe, but (which is more) is enabled by an extraordinarie measure of spirituall gifts, euen in an admirable maner, to set foorth the whole mysterie of the redemption of mankind. Wee meet with like examples in holie writ. Great was the affliction of *Ioseph*. He was sold for a slaue, they held his feet in the stocks, and he was laid in yrons ^b. But when the Lord had thorowly tried him, as siluer is tried, in the furnace of a long & grieuous affliction, he was not barely enlarged, but withall aduanced to a place of great respect. The king made him Lord of his house, &c. ^c. *Moses* his triall is at large set downe in the storie ^d, his feare, his flight, and his long seruice in Midian; but when Gods appointed time came, he not onely restored him to the fellowship of his owne countrey men, but made him the guide and captaine of his people, so that hee neuer wrought greater things by the hand of any meere man, than he did by the hand of *Moses*. Notorious is the Historie of *Iob*, how he was tormented in person, and wasted in estate: but when the Lord turned his captiuitie, hee gaue him twice so much as he had before ^e, and blessed his last daies more than the first ^f. To this agreeth that of *Dauid*, who saith, that the Lord did not onely bring him out of the horrible pit, but also set his feet vpon a rocke, and ordered his goings ^g. And that of the afflicted people is of like nature; After two daies (say they) he will reuine vs: that is not all, but, in the third day he will raise vs up, and

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we shall live in his sight^h. He would not only pull backe his hand and forbear to smite (which yet had beene much) but he would come as a skilfull and tender hearted Surgeon, to lappe vp their sores, to powre oyle into their wounds; to *giue them beautie for ashes, the garment of gladnesse for the spirit of heavinesse*ⁱ: neither would he alone in some little measure revieve and quicken them, but he would giue that large measure of strength that they should *live in his sight*. *They which went weeping, do not onely returne with ioy, but they do ouer and aboue bring their sheaves with them*^h.

The reason of the Lords so dealing proceeds, first, from his mercie: *He knoweth whereof we be made* (saith David) *he remembreth that wee are but dust*ⁱ: therefore lest his afflicted seruants should bee swallowed vp with heavinesse, and euen overcome with discouragement, he doth not onely withdraw his hand of chastisement, but hee addeth some speciall mercy, to the end that they may be comfortable assured, that whatsoever was done, was done to prepare them for a greater kindnesse. Secondly, it proceedeth from his Wisedome: hee knoweth that none doe value his kindnesse more, or are fitter to imploy them to their owne good and the good of others, than those that haue beene most humbled by afflictions: according as no ground is so fit to receiue seed, euen with a full hand, as that which hath beene most torne with the plough, and beaten smallest with the labour of the husbandman: For this cause God is wont to make readie his seruants for great graces by great crosses: Affliction is his schoole in which hee traineth them vp for the best purposes.

This doctrine is full of comfort to all, who being vnder the crosse in what kinde soeuer, doe looke vp to the hand which smiteth, and seeke to profit by tribulation. The Lords yoke is vnpleasing to flesh and blood, and his chastisements like bitter pilles which cannot goe

^h Hoi. 6. 2.ⁱ Isa. 61. 3.^h Psal. 126.ⁱ Psal. 103. 14.*The Vse.*

^m Hebr. 12.
1 L.

downe without much annoyance to the stomacke; but if thou wilt haue true solide comfort, looke not so much vpon the present grieuance, as vpon the *quiet fruit of Righteousnesse*^m which will surely follow: and take it for a rule which neuer faileth, that the crosse (if care bee had to profit thereby) neuer departs but it leaueth a blessing behinde: God giues some speciall fauour or other in lieu of the former burthen. *Zacharie*, who had beene dumbe ten moneths, not only speakes, but being furnished with a large portion of new grace, he speakes more heauenly than before. Learne thus to bee humbled with *Zacharie*, and so, thus thou shalt be comforted.

The 2. Do-
ctrine.

Secondly, from hence we are taught another doctrine; *That those whom God intendeth to imploy in any speciall seruice, hee furnisheth with gifts suteable to the nature of the businesse, in which he will employ them.* *Zacharie* is appointed to prophecie: the businesse is waightie, therefore he is filled with the holy Ghost, that he may be able to performe it. This may be made plaine by many particulars: The Lord meant to send *Moses* vpon a seruice of great consequence. *I will send thee to Pharaoh &c*ⁿ: *Moses*, being guiltie of his owne infirmitie, was afraid to vndergoe it: *Oh my Lord I am not eloquent &c*^o: The Lord supplied his want: *Goe now, and I will be with thy mouth, &c*^p. *Isaiah* being in a vision in the presence of God, and considering the nature of the seruice to which he was called, cried out, *Wo is me, for I am undone, &c*^a. After this one of the Seraphims touched his mouth with a coale from the Altar, and the Prophet was thereupon so sensible of the supplie of grace, that hee was as ready to go as the Lord was to imploy him: *Heere am I, send me*^r. The same is to be seene in *Jeremie*: God calling him, he began to complaine of his insufficiencie; *O Lord, beholde I can not speake, for I am a childe*^t. Well, the Lord tooke away his feare, by bestowing a competencie of gifts; *Behold I haue put my words in thy mouth*^e. Touching *Ezechiel*, as

ⁿ Exod. 3. 10.

^o Exod. 4. 10.
^p vers. 12.

^a Isay 6. 5.

^r vers. 8.

^t Jer 1. 6.

^e vers. 9.

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there is mention made of Gods sending him ^a, so there is also of Gods furnishing him ^a. Christ told his Disciples, that he would *make them Fishers of men* ^r, that is, that hee would traine them vp to be competently fit for the seruice to which he ordained them: For this cause, before hee chose thē *he spent the whole night in praier to God* ^z, *he breathed on them the Holy Ghost* ^z. Hee willed them after his ascension, *to tarie at Ierusalem, untill they were endued with power from on hie* ^b. Bezaleel and Aholiab, inas- much as they were to worke in the Tabernacle, were fil- led with an excellent spirit ^c: and when God chose Saul to the kingdome *he gaue him another heart* ^d. If God should not thus deale, it were contrarie to those principles of holie wisdom which himselfe hath left vpon record in his Word. *As vineger is to the Teeth, and smoke to the Eyes, so is the slothfull to them that send him* ^e. Hee that sendeth a message by the hand of a foole, is as he that cut- eth off the feete ^f. No wise man will send a foole on an er- rand of moment: Who will set a fresh souldier ouer an ar- mie, or entrust a dumbe man with an embassage? It were an odious imputation to the wisest God, to thinke him lesse carefull in his businesse, than men are in their affaires. Be- sides, great is the corruption of our nature, our Heart wic- ked aboue all things ^g, the imaginations of it are onely euill ^h. Now, as men doe not gather grapes of thornes, nor figges of thistles ⁱ, so the heart of man, which is in it selfe, euen a verie mint of vanitie, and a forge of profane, godlesse and irreligious thoughts, cannot bring forth any good matter without speciall enabling.

This is a good admonition to all those which intend to enter into any seruice of weight, either in the Church or commonwealth. It is a dangerous thing to thrust ones selfe into the Lords businesse. Heauie will that saying be, when God shall say of any; *I haue not sent them, yet they ranne* ^k: And woe to him who shalbe challenged with that; *Friend, how camest thou in hither* ^l? Now hee that would know.

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whether

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^a Eze. 1.3. &c.
^x Eze. 2.2. &
 3.1.
^y Matth. 4.19.

^z Luk. 6.12.

^z Ioh. 10.12.

^b Luk. 24.49.

^c Exo. 35.31.

^d 1. Sam. 10.9.

^e Pro. 10.26.

^f Pro. 26.6.

^g Ier. 17.9.

^h Gen. 6.5.

ⁱ Matth. 7.16.

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^k Ier. 2.21.

^l Matth. 23.12.

whether God hath sent him, must not stay for reuelations or some speciall informations from heauen, but hee must search his owne heart, to see with what graces he is furnished: If betweene the calling he intends, and his sufficiencie, there be any proportion, there is an euidence of sending; where there is not, he that vndertakes it, is but an intruder, and his reckening will be terrible.

Now followeth to consider the generall nature of the businesse to which *Zacharie* was enabled: It is said, *hee Prophecied*. To *Prophecie*, in Scripture signifieth two things: 1. To foretell things to come, and so the word ordinarily signifieth in the old Testament. 2. Exactly and soundly to interpret the Scripture, to which sense the word is often applied in the new Testament^m. *Zacharie* his *Prophecyng* may not vnfitly be referred to both: For he partly foretold things to come, as of *Iohn Baptist*, and partly also hee did excellently interpret things anciently written of the *Messias*. Once, this we see, that the *Holie Ghost* in him was not idle, but did discouer it selfe in some holy and religious imployment: so that hence this is gathered; *That the graces of Gods spirit wheresoeuer they bee, are not idle, but are alwaies to be seene in the doing of some spirituall good, according to their places and callings who are indued therewith*. *Zacharie* is filled with the *Holy Ghost*, and straightway he prophecietieth: the more graces hee had receiued in himselfe, the more good proceedeth from him to others. *He that beleeueth on me, (saith our Sauour) out of his bellie shall flow riuers of life*ⁿ. The graces receiued shall issue out to the refreshing of others. *Paul* saith, that it pleased God to reueale his *Sonne* to him, that he might preach him among the *Gentiles*^o, and that God did comfort him in all his tribulation, that he might be able to comfort others^p. It is an expresse commandement: *Euerie man as he hath receiued; so let him minister vnto another, as a good disposer of the manifold grace of God*^q. Every one is a *Steward*, not to engrosse Gods graces to himselfe, but to imploy them

^m 1. Cor. 14. 1.

&c.

1. Thess. 5. 20.

The 3. Do-
ctrine.

ⁿ Ioh. 7. 38.

^o Gal. 1. 16.

^p 2. Cor. 1. 4.

^q 1. Pet. 4. 10.

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to a common benefit. *The word* (saith the Prophet) *was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bozes, and I could not stay*^c: and, *we cannot but speake*, say the Apostles^f. The gifts and graces of Gods spirit are like the ointment, wherewith *Marie* anointed Iesus feete; the text saith, *the house was filled with the savour of it*^e. It is truely said, that Good is a spreader of it selfe^u: It is like a candle in a workmans shop in a winters euening, which both giueth light to the workman, and to the passers by also.

This first may be an aduertisement to those, which being called to the seruice of the Church, are negligent in their places: some such would bee accounted learned and good scholars. But it cannot be so: Where the graces of God are, they are neuer idle: Where there is idlenesse in action, there is emptinesse in affection. It may be that in such a loiterer, as the Prophet speaketh of, *who lieth & sleepeth, and delights in sleeping*^a, there may be a great deale of confused knowledge, but certainly there is no sanctified learning: There is no Holie Ghost in thy heart, if (thy calling requiring it) there be no Prophecy in thy mouth; and what vse is there of a head full of learning, with a mouth full of nothing? It is truely said that the *Priests lips should preserue knowledge*^v: But why? To hoord it vp as misers do their corne? No: But that his lips may feed many^z, and may spread abroad knowledge^a. Therefore also (saith the Prophet) *the people must seeke it at his mouth*^b. Wherefore let vs hold this: The gifts of the spirit and profitable imployment cannot be separated; He is not truely learned, who doth not truely labour: *When thou art conuerted strengthen the brethren*^c.

Secondly, this may haue a larger application to all; thus, *Paul* saith, *If any man haue not the spirit of Christ, the same is none of his*^d: Now if wee would know whether Christs spirit be in vs or no, we must follow Christs rule, of iudging the tree by the fruits^e. Let vs see what comes from vs, which may be profitable to others in matters concern-

^c Jer. 20.9.
^f Act. 4.20.

^e Ioh. 12.3.
^u *Eonime est sui diffusum.*

The 1. Vse.

^a Isa. 56.10.^v Mat. 2.7.^z Pro. 10.21.^a Pro. 15.7.^b Math. 2.7.^c Luk. 22.32.

The 2. Vse.

^d Rom. 8.9.^e Matt. 7.16.

1. Thes. 5. 14.

8 Hebr. 10. 24.

ing life eternall. Where be those particulars spoken of in the Scripture, *admonishing the unruly, comforting the feeble minded, &c.* Where is our *Considering one another to provoke to love and to good workes*? Where be our prayers, exhortations and instructions in our families? Where such fruits as these bee are wanting, there the graces of Gods spirit are not present. Hee that is not carefull in his place to profit others in the waies of godlinesse, himselfe is farre from any true taste of godlinesse. *Zacharie* was filled with the Holy Ghost, and he was forthwith imployed in a spirituall service, of which euen we haue the benefit to this day. Thus much of the Preface.

*The division
of the Hymn
into 2. parts.*

*The 1. part
divided.*

The Prophecie or Hymne it selfe may be diuided into two parts: the first of which is touching Christ and the worke of saluation by him wrought, vnto the 76. verse: the second is of *Iohn Baptist* and his office in respect of Christ. The former part againe may be cut into two members: 1. A proposition (*Blessed be the Lord God of Israel.*) 2. The prooffe thereof (*For he hath visited and redeemed his people &c.*)

In the proposition we haue to note two things. 1. A dutie performed: 2. A description of the partie to whom it is performed. The dutie performed, is a *Blessing of God*. To *Blesse God*, is an ordinarie phrase of Scripture, it betokeneth nothing else, but to giue thanks to God for his blessings receiued: These words, *praise God*, or *blesse God*, or *giue thanks to God*, are indifferently translated: It is all one as if *Zacharie* had said, *All praise, honour and thanks be giuen vnto God*. The Doctrine commended to vs is this; *That the praising and blessing of the name of God for his goodness, is one part of that spirituall worship and service, which is owing from vs vnto God*. It is plaine by the text. For I aske what that was which *Zacharie* heere performed: It must be answered, that he offered vp a sacrifice of thankesgiuing vnto God. I aske againe, Did he therein worship God? Out of all question he did, and that which he did, proceed

*The 4. Do-
ctrine.*

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ded from the spirit of God, and could not chuse but be acceptable before him. Out of these it must needs follow, that thanksgiving is one part of that dutie which is to be performed by vs vnto God. This will easily be made good by Scripture: *Call vpon me (saith God) in the day of trouble, so I will deliuer thee, and thou shalt glorifie me^b. Let vs offer the sacrifice of praier alwaies to God^c*. This kinde of seruice is in those words compared to those sweet smelling sacrifices which in the time of the Law were offered to God. Paul bids ioyne giuing of thanks with our requests which wee shew vnto God^k: so that this dutie is like the salt with which all our seruices must be seasoned. Hence are the commendations giuen of it, *It becommeth vpright men to be thankfull^l: It is a good thing to praise the Lord^m: It is a pleasant thing, and praise is comelyⁿ*. Hence was Danids care to giue euidence of speciall thankfulness vpon speciall occasions: from whence came that phrase of his, *A new song^o*, signifying his course of particular insisting vpon particular fauours. The default heerein remaineth as a great staine in the good name of Hezekiah, *He did not render according to the reward bestowed vpon him^p*.

This should prouoke vs to make conscience of this duty, euerie man saying to his soule with *Danid, My soule prayse thou the Lord, and all that is within me praise his holy name^q*. Thanksgiving was ordained as an exercise for man in Paradise, and shall be an exercise in heauen, when as all other exercises are determined. In heauen the word and Sacraments shall cease, but the *Blessing of God* shall neuer cease, being the peculiar exercise of the Angels and Saints of the Lord: The more wee practise this dutie now, the more we haue our *Conuersation in heauen^r*: If it bee a seruice tedious vnto vs, heauen it selfe will bee a burden. When this dutie is named with the particulars of it, many will be ready to step forth and say with him in the Gospel, *All these haue I kept from my youth^s*: we thanke God (say we) for all: but when it commeth to triall, the case will be

^b Psal. 50.15.^c Hebr. 13.15.^k Phil. 4.6.^l Psal. 33.1.^m Psal. 92.1.ⁿ Psal. 147.1.^o Psal. 40.3.^p 2. Chr. 32.25.

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^q Psal. 103.1.^r Phil. 3.20.^s Luk. 18.21.

^c Lu. 17. 17. 18.

^a Matt. 21. 30.

^{*} Psal. 50. 23.

^y Luk. 18. 11.

^{*} Gen. 27. 22.

^{*} Iam. 3. 11.

like that of the ten lepers. *Tenne were clenſed, but one onely returned to giue God praiſe* ^c. Many enioiers of Gods bleſſings, few which returne backe to ſhew their thankfulneſſe. And this appeareth by three things: Firſt by our generall careleſneſſe in the duties of Chriſtian holineſſe. True thankfulneſſe ſtands not in words and ſhewes, but in the praſtiſe of obedience. The ſonne in the Goſpell who ſaid, *I go ſir, yet went not* ^a, was he dutifull? ſo he who ſaith, *I thanke God*, and, *Bleſſed be God, &c.* and yet careth not to diſhonor God, is he thankfull? *Offering prayſe*, and, *diſpoſing ones way aright*, are coupled together as companions ^{*}: where the latter is wanting, the firſt is but a ceremonie. He that hauing receiued a kindneſſe from me, ſhall come to me and ſay, he thanks me, and when he hath turned his backe, ſhall doe me a diſpleaſure; I will neuer thinke him to be thankfull. He that commeth to God, like the Phariſee, with *Lord I thanke thee*, ^y, in his mouth, and yet maketh no conſcience of ſinne, is but a diſſempler. Hee hath *Iacobs voice, but Eſaus hands* ^{*}. His words are the words of bleſſing, but his deeds are full of curſedneſſe. Sith then men generally liue in groſſe ſinnes to the diſhonor of God, and to the diſcredit of religion, let their words be as they will, yet they ſhall be caſt off as men guiltie of vnthankfulneſſe. The ſecond ſigne of our vnthankfulneſſe is, our paſſing ouer daily fauours without reſpect: Health, libertie, reſt, food, ſucceſſe in our affaires, theſe things are daily beſtowed, yet wee uſe them as ſwine, who eat the maſt, but neuer looke vp to the tree from whence it falleth: we goe to our meat, to our reſt, to our labour without any ſignification of our acknowledgement from whom theſe things come; or of our opinion, that nothing can do vs good without Gods bleſſing. The third ſigne, is the curſedneſſe of many of our language. Saint Iames maketh it a matter of impoſſibilitie, that God ſhould be bleſſed by a curſed toong; *Doeth a fountaine at one place ſend out ſweet water and bitter* ^{*}? Swearers, raylers, ſlanderers, vicious ſpeakers;

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speakers; as holinesse cannot dwell in their hearts, so neither can their toongs bee messengers of any true thankfulness vnto God. To conclude this point then, if we will be thought truly to worship God, let vs make conscience of the dutie of thankfulness: if we will be thought truly thankfull, let vs declare our thankfulness by obedience, let vs take all occasions to blesse God for blessing vs, and let vs beware how we defile our tongues with cursednesse. Thus much of the dutie to be performed.

Now followeth the description of the partie to whom it must be performed: *The Lord God of Israel*. He is the Lord of the whole earth, according to that in the Psalme: *The Earth is the Lords and all that therein is*^b. How then is he the God of Israel? By *Israel* is meant the church & chosen people of God: and therefore the elect are called *The Israel of God*^c, & the true seruants of God, *Israelites indeed*^d. The state and Church of Israel was a type of the Church of God, selected and culled out from the rest of the world, to be *a peculiar people to himselfe*^e: so then; *The God of Israel* is the God of his Church: This is his especiall dignitie, as when a great man carieth the name of his Baronry. Hence we are taught two things; the one is this, *The absolute and impregnable safetie of Gods Church*: The Lord is the God thereof. God would haue euen the very situation of Ierusalem to be a signe of his protection: *As the mountaines are about Ierusalem, so is the Lord about his people*^f: *God is in the midst of it, therefore shall it not bee mooued*^g: *He will couer thee* (saith the Psalmist to the whole bodie of Gods people) *under his wings, thou shalt bee sure under his feathers, &c*^h. Beholde, he that keepeth Israel shall neither *slumber nor sleepe*ⁱ. The Church of God is shadowed out by Solomons bed: *threescore strong men are round about it of the valiant men of Israel, they all handle the sword, and are expert in warre, euery one hath his sword vpon his thigh for the feare by night*^k. Deseruedly therefore said David, *Blessed are the people whose God is the Lord*^l.

^b Psal. 24. 1.^c Gal. 6. 16.^d Ioh. 1. 47.^e Tit. 2. 14.*The 5. Doctrine.*^f Psal. 125. 2.^g Psal. 46. 5.^h Psal. 91. 4.ⁱ Psal. 121. 4.^k Can. 3. 7. 8.^l Psal. 144. 15.

The Vse.

▪ Isay 46. 13.

▪ Isay 4. 6.

• Luke 16.

4. &c.

• Prou. 18. 11.

• Isay 4. 5.

• Eph. 4. 3.

The 6. Doctrine.

• 1. Tim. 4. 10.

• Psal. 4. 6.

• Psal. 84. 10.

• Matt. 16. 26.

The Vse.

• Psal. 4. 6.

• Math. 6. 33.

This doeth teach vs a good lesson. All kingdomes haue their periods, all states are subiect to innouation, onely the Church of God is of perpetuities: *I will giue saluation in Zion*, saith God^m, there shall be *a place of refuge, and a coner for the storme and for the raine*ⁿ. Naturall men can see the vncertaintie of all outward things, and the vanitie of the greatest assurances, yet they take not the right course for safegard: some vse the policie of the *unjust Steward*^o: some verifie the saying of Salomon, *The rich mans riches are his strong citie, and as an hie wall in his imagination*^p: some put all desperately to an aduventure. The onely way is to cleaue to the Church of God, there *the Lord will create a defence*^q. They which labour to keepe the fellowship of Gods people *by the unitie of the spirit in the bond of peace*^r; the Lord is their God, they shall be sure of the surest protection.

The other thing taught hence is, *That to bee one of Gods people, a true lively member of his Church, is a mans greatest honour*. It is (we see) Gods greatest honor, and his highest title, to be called the *God of Israel*, the *God of his Church*: He is (saith Paul) *the Saviour of all men, specially of them that beleene*^s. In the Church God is knowen, there hee is worshipped, there he bestoweth the greatest prerogatiues, and thence he receiueth the greatest honour. It is his chiefe honour to bee the God of his Church; so is it our chiefe dignitie to be true limmes of that societie. Hence was Dauids desire, to haue the Lord to *lift up the light of his countenance vpon him*^t, and to be though but a *Doore-keeper in Gods house*^u. Out of the Church there is no saluation; and, *What shall it profit a man to winne the world, if hee should lose his soule*^v?

Many are wont to say, *Who will shew vs any good*^w? To those which so demaund, I answer, Behold heere the chiefest good: the best and most absolute preferment, *Seeke the kingdome of God*^x, labour to be one of Gods people, thou canst not haue a greater dignitie.



THE SECOND SERMON.

Because he hath visited and redeemed his people.



WE haue heard of the Proposition, (that the Lord God of *Israel* is to be praised.) Now followeth the proofe thereof: *For he hath visited and redeemed his people, &c.* The summe of the proofe is; that God is therefore to be praised, because of that great worke which he hath wrought for the good and saluation of his Church. Heere we haue two things to speake of: 1. The parties to whom the benefit of this great worke appertaines, and for whose sake it is wrought. 2. The worke it selfe.

Touching the first, they are *Gods people*, that is, those which belong vnto the election of grace, and which are in Gods eternall counsell ordained vnto life. Hence we are taught, *That the blessings which doe directly & immediately concerne life eternall, onely those are interested in them, which are Gods people*: This is plaine in this place: For if the question be, whom the Lord did *visit and redeeme*? It is answered by the spirit of God speaking in *Zacharie*, that he *visited and redeemed his people*: so speaketh the Scripture. It was the saying of the Angell, *He shall saue his people from their sinnes*^a: there the benefit of *saluation* is restrained onely to Gods people. So againe: *I bring you tidings of great ioy which shall be to all the people*. The birth of Christ is a message of ioy, but to whom? not to all: (for all

The 1. Doctrine.

^a Matth. i. 21.

^b Luk 2. 10.^c Gal. 6. 46.^d Ioh. 10. 15.^e vers. 29.^f Ioh. 17. 9.*The Use.*^g Matt 7. 21.

doe not reioyce therein) but onely to the chosen of God: *The people: The*, is a word of speciall distinction ^b. *Peace shall be upon them, and upon the Israel of God* ^c. Who be the Israel of God, but only those which are here termed *his people*? Aske then to whom belongs *Peace and mercy*: what? to all without distinction? No: but to the *Israel of God*: Consider the course of the Apostles words, *Tit. 2. 14*. For whom did Christ *giue himselfe*? whom hath hee *redeemed from iniquitie*? whom hath he *purged*? onely those whom he hath chosen out to be *a peculiar people to himselfe*. Christ speaking of his death, tieth it to his sheepe: *I lay downe my life for my sheepe* ^d: but who be *his sheepe*? euen those which are *giuen to him of his Father* ^e. It is a speciall speech of limitation which Christ vsed in his prayer: *I pray for them, I pray not for the world* ^f. Many such places might bee gathered together. We heard how God is the *God of Israel*, the God of his Church: Hee is so the God of his Church as that none els can haue anie interest in his loue.

We heare much of saluation, of life eternall, of the glorie to be reuealed heereafter: These things are great, and onely they are happie which shall enioy them. All men almost promise these things vnto themselues: there is not amongst vs the veriest drunkard, or swearer, or vicious person, or Vsurer, or despiser of good things, but if you talke with him, he will make shew of a hope and expectation to bee saued; of all other things, he maketh himselfe beleue that he is surest of that. But let vs learne this one thing, and meditate wel of it, That eternal mercy, the benefit of redemption by Christ, the deliuerance from the bondage of spirituall enemies, these things belong not to all: Many, euen of those which professe Christ, and which say *Lord, Lord* ^g, yea and which preach Christ, shall be thrust out at the day of separation. They be Gods peculiar people onely to whom these things appertaine. Look to it, bee sure thou art one of Gods people; otherwise, when mention is made of the things which concerne eternall life, I say

to

The Second Sermon.

15

to thee as *Peter* did to *Simon Magus*, *Thou hast neither part nor fellowship in this businesse* ^a. But how shall I know (wilt thou say) that I am one of Gods people? I will tell thee plainly: How is a man knowne to be one of the Kings subiects? one (as we say) of the Kings liege people? Euen by this: his obedience to the holesome lawes of the kingdome. So in this: holie obedience is the marke and badge of Gods people: *My sheepe heare my voice* ⁱ. *Yee are my friends, if you doe whatsoeuer I command you* ^k. It is not the twanging of religion vpon the toong, but the practise of holines in the life, which sheweth a man to be a Christian: Gods peculiar people are zealous of good works ^l. To this therefore we are now come: Wouldst thou bee sure that the treasures of happinesse which are stored vp in Christ, belong to thee? enquire into thy selfe whether thou be one of Gods people: Remember how Gods people are discerned, *They heare my voice*, saith our Sauior. If Christs voice in his word be not euen musicke in thy eares, yea sweeter than honie, and the honie combe ^m, dearer than thousands of gold and siluer ⁿ, the ioy and reioycing of thy heart ^o: If the fruits of holinesse appeare not in thy life, but rather the *unfruitfull works of darknesse* ^p, those works of the flesh which *S. Paul* speaketh of ^q; thou art none of Gods people, no subiect to his kingdome, but a very rebell & traitor to his Maiesty; and when thou thinkest to thrust in among Saints, to enioy the felicitie of his chosen ^r, thou shalt heare that heavy sentence passe vpon thee and such as thou art; *Those mine enemies, which would not that I should raigne over them, bring hither and slay them before me* ^s.

Now wee are come to the worke it selfe, where manie things come in order to be touched. 1. The fountain & beginning therof, (*He hath visited*). 2. The generall nature of the worke it selfe, (*Redeemed*). 3. The meanes of it, (*And hath raised up the horne, &c.*) 4. The euidence of it; the testimonie of the Prophets, in whom the couenant of grace and the oath of God to *Abraham* are at large re-

^a Act. 8. 21.ⁱ Ioh. 10. 27.^k Ioh. 15. 14.^l Tit. 2. 14.^m Psal. 19. 10.ⁿ Psal. 119. 72.^o Ier. 15. 16.^p Eph. 5. 11.^q Gal. 5. 19.^r Psal. 136. 5.^s Luk. 19. 27.

corded (*As he spake by the mouth, &c.* 5. The end of it, *(That we being deliuered &c.)* Of these shall be spoken in order.

The beginning and fountaine of all is Gods visitation : *(He hath visited)* There is a twofold visiting ascribed to God in Scripture : One of displeasure : *In the day of my visitation I will visit their sinne vpon them* ^a. The Lord cometh out of his place to visit the sinne of the inhabitants of the earth ^b. The other is of mercy ; *The Lord visited Sarah as he had said* ^c, that is, he performed the good which he had promised. In this sense, the day of ones conuersion is called, *the day of visitation* ^d : So then heere : *God hath visited*,

that is, he hath graciously and mercifully looked vpon his people; he hath seene and beheld with a pitifull eie the miserie and bondage of his chosen, and he is now, as it were, come amongst them to shew them kindnesse. This visiting on Gods part hauing this signification, and being heere put in the first ranke, is the ground and spring of all which followeth ; and it affords vs this doctrine : *That the kindnesse and mercy, and free grace of God, is the beginning and the fountaine of all those good things which doe concerne eternall life.* Consider the place : manie things are heere spoken of Redemption : of a *Horne of saluation*; of a *Covenant and oath* of grace : But whence proceed all these, but from the sole mercie of God ; euen from his gracious disposition to visite his people ? Where visiting is, there is presupposed a very wofull estate : *Visit now yonder cursed woman*, said Iehu of Iezabel, meaning to respect her aboue her desert ^e. It is easie to shew out of the Scripture how the loue, mercie, and grace of God are noted, as the beginning of those things which concerne saluation. *The Lord* (saith Moses to the old Israelites) *did not set his loue vpon you, nor chuse you, because ye were more in number than any people, &c; but because the Lord loued you, &c.* ^f. Now the people of Israel were a type of Gods people : Canaan a type of heauen : it was Gods free loue which moued him to bring

them

^a Exod. 32.34.

^b Isay 26.21.

^c Gen. 21.1.

^d 1. Pet. 2.12.

The 2. Doctrine.

^e 1. King. 9.34.

^f Deut. 7.7.8.

The Second Sermon.

17

them into Canaan; it is his free grace for which hee vouchsafes to aduance vs to heauen. When mention is made of the course and order of our saluation, these and the like speeches stil come in: *So God loued the world^b, the good pleasure of his will, ^c, freely by his grace ^d, not by the works of righteousness which we had done, but according to his mercie ^e, not that we loued God, but that he loued vs ^f, who hath giuen vnto him first ^g?* These speeches agree with the manner of speech heere vsed, and doe shew plainly that there was nothing in man to mooue the Lord to reach out his arme of deliuerance; all proceeded from the absolute and vnderferued freedome of his grace. Manie things there were in man to prouoke God in his iustice finally to forsake him, nothing which might induce him to shew the least degree of fauour.

Besides that this doth ouerthrow all Popish opinion of merit, and (which is the maine end of all) sets out the grace and mercy of God to the full; it serueth to quicken in vs that duty of thankfulness, of which we heard before, and which *Zacharie* did here performe. A great blessing requirith great thanks, but the freer the blessing is, the greater should the thankfulness be. *All my fathers house* (sayd *Mephibosheth* to *Dauid*) *were but dead men before my Lord the King, yet diddest thou set thy seruant among them which did eat at thine owne table^h.* The lesse desert he found in himselfe, the more deeply did hee hold himselfe bound vnto *Dauid*: so that when we looke vpon the greatnesse of the blessing on the one side, (namely, life eternall, and a kingdom which can not be shaken) and then the smalnesse of our owne desert on the other side, who were but dead men before the Lord, *euendead in trespasses and sinnesⁱ*, we may well say with *Dauid*, *What shall wee render vnto the Lord^k?* This must needs condemne our carnall mindednesse: some things doe sometimes fall from vs, by way of thankfulness for outward things; as health, peace, seasonable weather, and such like: but the greatest blessing, the

^b Ioh. 3. 16.^c Eph. 1. 5.^d Rom. 3. 24.^e Tit. 3. 5.^f 1. Ioh. 4. 10.^g Rom. 11. 35.

The Use.

^h 2. Sa. 19. 28.ⁱ Eph 2. 1.^k Psal. 116. 12.

1 Phil. 3. 19.

m Act. 3. 23.

The 3. Do-
ctrine.

a Col. 1. 13.

o Rom. 6. 23.

p Rom. 7. 23.

q Rom. 6. 16.

r Ioh. 8. 35.

s Rom. 6. 11.

13.

chiefest fauor, and to which of al other we can lay the least claime, is scarcely once made mention of: *Blessed be God that hath visited vs when we were dead in sinne; thanks be to God for his Sonne Christ Iesus. How are we bound to his Ma-iestie, who hath shewed vs this mercy to redeeme vs!* It is a rare thing to heare of such a speech. It sheweth that we minde onely *earthly things*¹. Corne and Wine, a full basket, and a ful barne, these things wil affect vs; but the Lords merciful visitation in his Son Christ, in pulling vs out of the iawes of Sathan cannot mooue vs: It is a fearefull signe, euen that we are enthralled vnto Sathan, and in the very *bond of iniquitie*^m. For did we feele and apprehend our owne desert, to be eternally forsaken, and the riches of Gods mercy in visiting vs with his saluation, our spirits would be so rai- fied therewith, that all other things would seeme vile and base in comparison of this one. Thus much of the foun- taine of this great worke, which serueth notably to beate downe Merit, and to stirre vp thankfulnesse.

The generall nature of the benefit is set downe in this word (*Redeemed.*) To *redeeme* is (as we know) to buy out: the very word in the common vsage of it presupposeth a bondage and captiuitie. Whereupon iust occasion is giuen vs to consider *that miserable seruitude in which by nature we are all.* This *seruitude* is said to be vnder the power of dark- nesse^a, that is, vnder the power of spirituall enemies: which are three: 1. Sinne. 2. Death. 3. The Diuell. Sinne maketh vs subiect vnto death: for *the wages of sinne is death*^o. Death brings vs into the full and absolute po- wer of the diuell: That we are naturally seruants to sinne, it is plaine by the Apostles complaint: *I am carnall, sold vn- der sinne*^p. It is a true rule, *To whomsoever wee giue our selues as seruants to obey, his seruants we are*^q: and, *whoso- euer committeth sinne, is the seruant of sinne*^r: Now it is ap- parent that naturally wee obey sinne in the lusts thereof: and, *giue our members as weapons of vnrightheousnesse vnto it*^s; euery member hath his taske in the seruice of sinne, as the

Apostle

The Second Sermon.

19

Apostle sheweth ^a, and whereas slaues and bondmen doe their seruices and base offices grudgingly and discontentedly, we doe the businesse of sinne, willingly, readily and ioyfully. Againe, that wee are slaues to eternall death it cannot be denied: For what was it which God said to *Adam*: *In the day that thou eatest thou shalt die the death* ^a? Assoone as hee had sinned, that sentence laide hold vpon him, and death eternall became his portion. Now, lastly for bondage vnder Sathan, the Apostle saith, that so long as we are *the children of disobedience* ^a he worketh in vs, wee are in his snare, and *are taken of him at his will* ^a. This is the common slaerie of all: there is not the greatest, nor noblest, nor mightiest, nor fairest, nor wealthiest among the sonnes of men, but he is in his naturall estate thus enthralled. Let men boast neuer so much in outward respects, as sometimes the Iewes did, *We were neuer bond to any* ^a, yet till the *Sonne shall make them free* ^a, this is their captiuitie. We read of the bondage of the Israelites in Egypt, there they were kept vnder with burdens, and made weary of their *lines by sore labour* ^b; vnder the Philistims ^c; vnder the Midianites ^d; vnder other nations ^e; of the slavery of *Samson bound with fetters* and made to *grinde* ^f like a horse: These particulars were grievous to be borne, but to this spirituall captiuitie they are nothing. When basenesse, and crueltie, and spight are ioyned together in an oppressour, how heauie must the yoke needs bee? Now, what baser thing than sinne; what more cruell than death; what fuller of venom than the diuell? Who is able to describe the miserie of that bondage, where there is such a concurrence of such a threefold extremitie? This is our slaerie, this is that from which we are redeemed: from sinne vnto holinesse, from death vnto life eternall, from the power of Sathan into the glorious libertie of the sonnes of God. For this purpose a *Price* ^g was paid, but of no common value; (for we were not redeemed with corruptible things ^h, hee gaue himselfe a rancome ⁱ, he tooke on him the forme of a seruant ^j,

^a Rom. 3. 13.
&c.^a Gen. 27.^a Eph. 2. 1.
^b 2. Tim. 2. 26.^a Ioh. 8. 33.
^a vers. 36.^b Exod. 1. 11.
14.^c 1. Sam. 13.
19.^d Iud. 6. 3. 4.
^e Psal 66. 12.
78. 60. 61.
&c.^f Iud. 16. 21.^g 1. Cor 6. 20.^h 1. Pet. 1. 18.ⁱ 1. Tim. 2. 6.^j Phil 2. 7.

to

to free vs from this eternall flauerie. We may truely saie, *This was the Lords doing*, and I pray God, it may be *marvellous in our eyes*¹.

¹ Psal. 118. 23.

The 1. Vse.

² Gen. 28. 17.

³ 2 Sam. 6. 22.

⁴ Prou. 30. 32.

⁵ Job 41. 6.

⁶ Luk. 19. 13.

The 2. Vse.

⁷ 1. Cor. 6. 20.

8

⁸ vers. 19.

Here is first a good lecture of humilitie, the best and the hardest lesson of all others : the best, because I may say of it as *Iacob* did of *Bethel*; *This is the gate of heauen*^m : the hardest, because we are full of selfe-loue, and there will be no small adoe to make vs *low in our owne sight*ⁿ, and as nothing in our owne seeming. Let vs in this word (*Redeemed*) (as in a glasse) behold what wee are, and what iust matter we haue of humilitie, and how little reason to be secure. The very name of a seruant or bond-man, or vassall, were enough to put a man downe in his owne conceit; but to be seruant to so base a thing as sinne, to so hatefull a person as the diuell, to so terrible a thing as eternall death, I do not see how any man may be able to expresse it. Whosoever therefore thou be, who *hast beene foolish in lifting vp thy selfe*^o, thinking better of thine own soules estate than there is cause, henceforth *lay thine hand upon thy mouth*, learne to *abhorre thy selfe in dust and ashes*^p, remember, that whatsoever opinion thou hast conceived of thy selfe, yet the verdict of the Scripture (which is the voice of God) is, that thou art by nature a slaue vnder the power of darknesse: Satan is the prince of darknesse, thou art his subiect; hell is the kingdome of darknesse, and that is thine inheritance. When thou considerest this, *smite thy brest with the Publican*^q, pray the Lord to humble thee, that the glad tidings of saluation in Christ may be welcome to thee.

Secondly, heere is also a good lesson of obedience. *Ye are bought for a price, therefore glorifie God &c.*^r. It is a very direct inference. God hath redeemed vs, freed vs from thraldome and from captiuitie: what should we refuse to do for him, euen by way of thankfulness? Besides, it is a matter of great equitie: *Ye are not your owne*, sayth the Apostle^s; wee are not in our owne power, his wee be who hath redeemed vs: and wherefore hath he redeemed vs?

what,

The Second Sermon.

21

what, that we should still serue sinne, that we should follow the vaine conuersation of the world, and bee led by the swaie of our owne hearts? Surely no. But to be zealous of good works ^a. I say then with Paul: *How shall we*, who are thus redeemed, and to this end redeemed, *live yet in sinne* ^b? Shall we liue to the dishonour of God, to the shame of religion, seruing our owne lusts, and drowning our selues in the pleasures of sinne, who haue receaued so great a deliuerance? God forbid. What shall we thinke of the vnthankfull Israelites, who being mightily deliuered out of bondage, yet cryed, *it had bene better for vs to serue the Egyptians* ^c? We must needs say they were vnworthie of so great a blessing. Take heed wee doe not make it our owne case. God hath sent his Sonne to redeeme vs, and to free vs from the thraldome of death, of sinne, and of Satan: We professe that we reioice in this: yet when we be called vpon to shake off the yoke of sin, & to become the *seruants of righteousness* ^d, we seeme to say as those Israelites did, *Let vs be at rest*: we would be content to be freed from death, the wages of sinne, but the businesse of sinne we would rather than our life we might continue in. Wee haue some corrupt humour or other, that, let the Lord say what hee will, wee must needs giue satisfaction to. Men would *serue God and Mammon* too ^e, God and *their bellies* too ^f, God and drunkennesse too, God and whooredome too, God and their pleasures too. This is a poore religion: this is a slender requitall for so great a benefit as redemption: Those which are redeemed, are redeemed *from their vaine conuersation* ^g. If thou bee ensnared in the sensuall delight of thine owne sinnes, I cannot see how it can bee said of thee, that thou art one of Gods redeemed. When a battle is ended, can it bee said that such a one is ransomed from the enimie who still followeth his campe, and willingly doth whatsoeuer he commands? No. If I see thee liue in the seruice of sinne: I am sure thou art not yet within the compasse of redemption. Remember wee this

^a Tit. 2. 14.^b Rom. 6. 2.^c Exod. 14. 12.^d Rom. 6. 18.^e Luk. 16. 13.^f Phil. 3. 19.^g 1. Pet. 1. 18.

D

Vse:

Vse: when thou hearest Redemption spoken of, thinke thou; *Hath God redeemed vs by his Sonnes blood, and shall I draw backe and chuse rather to runne mine old course in following the lusts of sinne? God forbid: Say rather: O Lord, I am thine, thou hast bought me, thou hast paid full dearly for mee, thou hast best right vnto me, thee will I serue: O strengthen me by thy grace, that my secret sinne may not ensnare me, that corruption may not get dominion ouer me.*



THE THIRD SERMON.

VERS. 69. *And hath raised vp the horne of saluation vnto vs in the house of his seruant Dauid.*



He next thing which commeth to bee handled, is the meanes by which this great worke of Redemption is effected; and that is set downe in this verse.

Where we haue two things to consider:

1. A matter done: (*He hath raised vp the horne of saluation vnto vs.*) 2. The

place where it is done, (*In the house of his seruant Dauid.*)

In the former point, two things must bee inquired.

1. Who is meant by this *Horne of saluation*. 2. Why the partie meant by this title is so stiled. He that is heere meant by the *Horne of saluation*, is *Iesus Christ*: For vnder heauen there is giuen no other name whereby we must be saued^c, and, to him giue all the Prophets witnesse^d. If he then be the partie whom all the Prophets pointed at, as the alone restorer of mankind, if there be no other meanes of saluation; who

should

*The points
to be hand-
led in this
Sermon.*

^c Act. 4. 12.

^d Act. 10. 43.

The Third Sermon.

23

should bee meant by the *Horne of saluation*, but onely Hee? Now for the next, why hee should be so entitled, it will easily appeare, if we consider the vsual forme of speaking in the Scripture. The spirit of God is wont by this word (*Horne*) to note out *Power* and *Strength*: as in those words, *All the hornes of the wicked will I breake*^c, that is, *I will take downe and abate the height and strength of the wicked*: and *Jeremy* speaking of the ruine of the kingdome of *Moab*, saith thus, *The horne of Moab is cut off*^f. The power and greatnesse of states and kingdomes and commonwealthes is often designed in Scripture by that word, as in *Daniel* and elsewhere. It is a speech borrowed from horned beaists, whose strength lieth in that part, and which vse it both for defence if they be assaulted, and for offence if they haue an intent to vanquish. So that by an *Horne of saluation* is rightly vnderstood (as it is vsually translated) *a Mightie saluation*, or, *a Sauour of admirable and exceeding power*. Heereupon then wee haue occasion to discourse of the power and strength of our Sauour, and that two waies. 1. As it concerneth the saluation of his Elect. 2. As it respecteth the confusion of the wicked.

Touching the first, this is the doctrine: *That Iesus Christ is euery way furnished with sufficiencie of power, for the accomplishment of the work of Redemption which he undertooke. This is easily prooued. It pleased the Father, that in him all fulnesse should dwell*^e. If all *Fulnesse*, surely then *Fulnesse of power*: and the word (*dwell*) is very effectually, signifying the perpetuities of his power: it is not for a turne or two, but eternally remaining in him, for the beginning, continuing, and perfecting of the saluation of his chosen. Againe, it is said of him, that *God the Father hath sealed him*^h. God hath (as it were) set a marke vpon him, and noted him out, as the onely Sauour. *He hath lifted him vp*ⁱ. Now it were a disparagement to the wisdom of God, to call the whole world to a dependance vpon him for their saluation, if hee were not in full and absolute maner able to effect it. Third-

^c Psal. 75. 10.^f Jer. 48. 25.

The 1. Doctrine.

^e Col. 1. 9.^h Ioh. 6. 27.ⁱ Aa. 5. 31.

^k 1. Pet. 2. 24.

^l 2. Cor. 5. 21.

^m Col. 2. 14.

ⁿ vers. 15.

^o Reu. 3. 18.

^p Isay 61. 10.

^q Gen. 27. 15.

^r Ioh 3. 16.

^s 1. Cor. 1. 30.

^t Iud. 3. 9.

^u vers. 12.

^x vers. 28 & c.

^y Iud. 4. 2.

^z Ioh 5. 24.

^a Ioh 10. 28.

ly, if we consider the nature of that which hee was to doe for mans redeeming, we shall see his power to effect it. He had two things to doe, if hee would procure our saluation. First he was to saue from destruction (which was due for the multitude of our sinnes.) Next he was to inuest into eternall happinesse, into which (because of our spiritual nakednesse) the iustice of God could giue vs no admission. To doe the former of these, he tooke vpon him our sinnes, he *bare them in his body* ^k, hee was *made sinne* ^l, and, *that hand-writing which was against vs*, he tooke out of the way ^m, and vpon his crosse triumphed ⁿ over all our spirituall enemies. To accomplish the latter, hee put vpon vs his owne righteousness, that so wee being clothed with that *white rayment* ^o, & with the *garment of saluation* ^p, as *Iacob* with the apparell of his brother *Esau* ^q, might obtaine the blessing. Thus is that fulfilled which was said: *God gaue his onely begotten Sonne, that whosoener beleeueth in him should not perish but haue life euerlasting* ^r. *Should not perish*, that he did by being our *Redemption* ^s: *But haue life euerlasting*, that hee brought to passe by becomming *our Righteousnesse* ^t. Many things might easily bee produced for this purpose, but these may suffice. Onely this one thing is to be noted, that the *saluation wrought* by Christ, as it may be called *mightie*, because of the present fulnesse, so doeth it deserue the same name, because, being done nothing is able to vndoe it. *Othniel* deliuered the Israelites from *Chushan*, and is therefore called their *Saviour* ^u, yet they fell after into the hand of *Moab* ^x. *Ehud* rescued them from the Moabites ^y, yet became they seruants to the Canaanites ^z. And a Physician is sometimes a meanes of health, in one disease, yet the same partie may after sicken, yea and die for all that. But in this worke of redemption it is otherwise: it is a thorow peece of worke. *He that beleeueth &c. shall not come into condemnation, but hath passed from death to life* ^a. *I giue my sheepe eternall life, they shall neuer perish &c* ^a. Thus wee see how Christ is a *Horne*

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of *saluation*: The *saluation* procured by him is plentifull, (euery way answerable to our spirituall need) and perpetuall, no sinne of man, no malice of hell is able to vndoe it.

The first vse heereof is, to let vs see the wrong which Popish religion doth to the whole mysterie of Christ. He is called (as we haue heard) *a Horne of saluation*, because of his absolute sufficiencie to effect that worke of *saluation* which he hath vndertaken. Papists, as though Christ were not sufficient, or his *horne* strong enough to batter down the kingdom of the diuel, and fully and wholly to reconcile vs vnto God, adioyne other things, as it were to supply that which is wanting in him, or to perfect that which hee hath begun: as for example: with his offers of grace, our free-will; with his righteousness, our good works; with his satisfaction for eternall punishment, our satisfaction for temporall punishment, either heere in Earth or in Purgatorie; with his intercession, the intercession of Saints. Thus they haue maymed the worke of Christ, and by their grosse and vnfitting patcheries haue vtterly defaced it. We must belecue the Scripture, which calleth Christ an *Horne of saluation*, that is, (as it seemeth to be expounded by the Apostle) one, *who hath by himselfe purged our sinnes*^b: that which he hath done is a worke complete and entire; hee *himselfe* onely, without any assistance, hath and doeth effect it. Many things are left vnto vs by way of obedience, but nothing by way of promoting that which hee hath begun. Thus this phrase (*a Horne of saluation*) is as an *Horne* of iron, to breake downe all those vnwarrantable supplies, which the Church of Rome conioineth and coupleth with the absolute and all-sufficient worke of Christ Iesus.

Secondly, this is a doctrine full of comfort to euery humbled Christian: as for example: Thou seest weaknesse in thy selfe, of vnderstanding, of will, of affection, of action, thou art vnable to doe any thing by which God might be pleased, or thine owne soule helped forward vnto life:

The 1. Use.

^b Heb. 1. 3.

The 2. Use.

* 1. Kin. 1. 50.

d Gen. 32. 26.

* Psal. 91. 4.

The 2. Doctrine.

f 1. Pet. 2. 6. 8.

g Phil. 1. 28.

h Rom. 11. 11.

i Psal. 2. 2.

k ver. 9.

Turne now the eies of thy faith to this *Horne of saluation*: thou shalt not finde so much weaknesse in thy selfe, as thou shalt find might and power in him; not so much emptines in thy selfe, as fulnesse in him; not so much pouerty in thy selfe, as plentie in him; & happiethou if the apprehension of thine own weaknes, make thee to long to be established and vpheld by his power. Offenders were wont of old to flie for succour and safegard to the *Hornes of the altar*^c: so when thou feelest thy selfe pursued by Sathan, and euen to be arrested by the wrath of God, flie to this *Horne of saluation*, labour to hold fast vpon it by faith: say, as did *Iacob* to the Angel: *I will not let thee goe except thou blesse me*^d. This is the surest couert: *thou shalt be sure under his feathers, his trueth shall bee thy shield and buckler*^e. Thus much touching the power of Christ for the saluation of his chosen.

The next is, *that hee is of absolute power for the full and finall ouerthrow and confusion of his enemies*. For Christ is armed either way; he is a *Horne*, both to defend and to strike: He is a *precious stone*, and he is a *stone of offence*^f, and euen in that that he is an ouerthrow to the wicked, he is a saluation to his chosen: according to that saying of *Pauls*, that persecution, was to the *aduersaries a token of perdition*, and to them which were troubled, a *token of saluation*^g: and so the same Apostle saith, that by the *Fall of the Iewes*, *saluation commeth to the Gentiles*^h: And of this power we must consider necessarily: Now what and how great it is, may be gathered out of the second Psalme. In the beginning of the Psalme, mention is made of the opposition of the world, and of men of all sorts, against the spirituall kingdome of Christ Iesus: *The kings of the Earth band themselves &c*ⁱ. Afterwards^k is set downe both the easinesse and the irreouerablenesse of their destruction. Hee is compared vnto some mightie man, hauing in his hand an iron scepter, or mace of brasse; his enemies are likened to an earthen pot. Now common sense teacheth vs how easie the break-

ing

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ing of a Potters vessell is with a rod of iron: A knocke with an instrument of much more weakenesse were sufficient to breake it, but, being of iron; the very waight of it alone, must needs crush it into many peeces. As this comparison sheweth the easinesse of the wickeds ouerthrow, so it maketh knowne the irrecoverablenesse too. And therefore the breaking of a potters vessell is vsuall in the Scripture, to signifie an vtter and irrecoverable destruction¹. I remember what is said of Antichrist, one of Christs strongest aduersaries, that yet Christ shall easily destroy him, euen with the *Breath of his mouth*,^m. *His enemies shall lick the dust*ⁿ: *He shall wound euen kings in the day of his wrath, and smite the head ouer diuers countries*^o. This was the stone cut without hands, seene by Nebuchadnezzar in his dream; which smote the image upon his feet and brake them to peeces^p.

This is a caueat to all the wicked enemies of the grace and kingdome of Christ Iesus; they may heere see the certaintie of their absolute ouerthrow. A head of glasse, against an head of brasse, what will become of it? *The thistle that is in Lebanon, sent to the Cedar that is in Lebanon*, said Iehoshaph king of Israel to Amaziah^q. Farre greater is the difference betwixt this Horne of the house of David, and those presuming weaklings, which are not afraid to withstand him. To all such I say with the Apostle, *Doe yee prouoke the Lord to anger, are yee stronger than he*^r? But (thou wilt say to me) who be these enemies of Christ, whom he thus will quell and destroy? I answer, they are his enemies, who *will not that he should raigne ouer them*^s. But how doth Christ raigne? with his word, this is the scepter of his kingdome, and the *Rod of his mouth*^t. They which obey his word are his subiects, they which disobey are his enemies. But what is it to obey his word; to be present now & then at the preaching of it? No: For so be many sleepers, scornors, Atheists, Church-papists, drunkards, whoremasters, Vsurers, &c. all which notwithstanding shall be

¹ Ifay 30.14.
Ier.19.10.
11.

^m 2. Th 2.10.
ⁿ Psal.72.9.
^o Psal.110.
5.6.

^p Dan. 2.34.

The Vse.

^q 2. Kin. 14.9.

^r 1. Cor. 10.
22.

^s Luk. 19.27.

^t Ifay 11.4.

^a Reu. 21. 8.

22. 15.

^x Gil. 6. 16.

^y Ioh. 15. 14.

shut out of the new Ierusalem^a. But to obey the word, is, to be ruled by the word, to walke according to the *Rule*^x of the word. *You are my friends, if yee doe what soeuer I command you^y*. If any man heare the word of Christ neuer so often, yet doe yeeld no obedience to it, hee shall haue his part among the enemies of Christ Iesus. So then, Christ is a *Horne* of power to bruisse his enemies. Art thou none of his subiects, doest thou not suffer his word to beare sway with thee, and to reforme thy corrupt and carnal conuersation, but liuest rather in grosse sinnes, to the disgrace of it, and to the reproch of the profession thereof? thou art an enemy to his Maiestie, and one of those whom he will consume with the breath of his mouth, and whom with the rod of his wrath he will breake in peeces like a potters vessell.

We are now come to the second point, the place where this *Horne of saluation* is raised vp: *In the house of his seruant David*. That we may make the best vse of this place, wee must consider in what state *Dauids* house was then when *Zacharie* endited this Hymne. The *House of David* was the stocke royall, and to his lawfull heires belonged the crowne of *Iudah*; but, at this time, *Dauids* kingdome was decaied, the glorie of it was dimmed and defaced, the gouernment and soueraigntie was fallen to strangers, the next heire, as the right of his succession was not ordinarily and vniuersally knowne, so he liued in poore estate: *Ioseph* was become a Carpenter. Out of this decaied familie of *David*, was this *Horne of saluation* raised: It did bud^z out of this dead stocke, euen as a roote out of a dry ground^z. Thus at once were ioyned in Christs person, Nobilitie and Pouertie. Nobilitie in regard of his birth (hee was of *Dauids* stocke): Pouertie in respect of his present estate, the glorie and pompe of the kingdome being quite overthrowne. Out of this, foure profitable points are to be obserued.

^z Psal. 132. 17.

^a Isay 53. 2.

The 3. Doctrine.

The first is: *That that Christ in whom we belecue, is the*

verie

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verie sense which was to come into the world, and besides whom no other is to be looked for. The Scripture had foretold that he should be the sonne of *Dauid*, and rise out of his stocke. The Lord hath sworne in trueth vnto *Dauid*, and hee will not shrinke from it, saying; Of the fruit of thy body will I set vpon thy throne^b. He shall sit vpon the throne of *Dauid*^c. I will raise vnto *Dauid* a righteous branch^d. As it is cleere in the old Testament, that the *Messias* should be made of the seed of *Dauid* according to the flesh; so the new Testament euidently sheweth how the same was fulfilled in *Christ*: for this cause the Euangelists doe labour to make manifest the descent of *Ioseph* and *Marie* from *Dauid*. *Matthew*^e maketh it plaine, how notwithstanding the meane estate which *Ioseph* was fallen into, yet the right of the kingdom rested in him. *Luke*^f sheweth how *Marie* was naturally descended out of *Dauid*s loines. Both *Matthew* and *Luke* ioine in *Zorobabel*, and from him deriue the line both of *Ioseph* and *Marie*; of *Ioseph* by *Abind*^g, of *Marie* by *Rhesa*^h. So that our Sauour, by *Marie* was borne of *Dauid*; by *Ioseph* was next heire to the crowne: For although he came not of *Ioseph* according to the flesh, yet being the next of his kinne, and *Ioseph* being childlesse, hee was by the law (of force among the Iewes) to succeed him as his lawfull heire. This right of *Christs* was apparent: the *Starre*ⁱ shewed it: *Herod*^k perceiued it: *Christ* acknowledged it^l: *Pilate* granted it^m, and the Iewes when that matter was questioned before *Pilate*, could not tell whom to name against *Christ* but *Cesar*ⁿ.

This serueth notably for the confirmation and setting of our faith in a point of the greatest moment, and in which it is dangerous to be mistaken. For what reason haue wee to relie vpon *Christ* for saluation, vnlesse wee bee assured that he is the anointed of God, euen that very Sauour vpon whom we may boldly depend? Our Sauour told vs, that there shall arise false *Christs*^o: how shall we be able to discouer them, and auoid deceit by them, if wee be not

^b Psal. 132. 11.^c Ilay 9. 7.^d Ier. 23. 5.^e Math. 1.^f Cap. 3.^g Math. 1. 13.^h Luk. 3. 27.ⁱ Mat. 2. 2.^k Vers. 7.^l Ioh. 18. 37.^m Ioh. 19. 15.ⁿ In the same verse.

The Vse.

^o Mat. 24. 23.

The 4. Doctrine.

p Isay 9. 6.

a Psal. 89. 27.

c Psal. 110. 12.

f Heb. 1. 6.

c Psal. 82. 7.

a Heb. 1. 8.

*The Vse.**The 5. Doctrine.*

settled in this point. It is good for vs therefore to marke how the old and new Testament doe heerein agree, that out of the harmonie of both, we may for the grounding of our faith deriue a comfortable conclusion.

The second point obserued from hence is: *That our Saviour Christ is a person of great nobilitie, euenthe noblest that euer was.* For one way he was the eternall Son of the most high, & another way (as man) lineally descended from the Patriarks & renowned kings of Iudah: It is a very Honorable stile which is giuen him in Scripture, far surpassing the royall stile of any earthly monarch: *Wonderfull, Counsellor, The mighty God, the Euerlasting Father, The Prince of Peace*^p: *I will make* (said the Lord) *my first borne higher than the kings of the earth*^a. And therefore both *kings and Iudges* are willed to *kisse*^c him, and to doe homage to him, and the verie Angels also are commanded to *worship him*^f. And whereas all kingdoms haue their ends, and the greatest Princes *die as men, and fall as others*^c; his *Throne is for euer and euer*^a.

This teacheth men of birth and blood not to stand too much vpon their Pedegrees and Ancestors, as though Nobilitie stood principally in this, that man is borne of man; If they affect the true nobilitie, they must labour to be the children of God by regeneration in Christ. This is the best ornament of blood: Noble birth without new birth in Christ is but an earthly vanitie. Though a man bee able to shew neuer so glorious a line of progenitors, yet if hee bee not a repentant sinner, hee is but base and vile in the sight of God. To be by faith ingrafted into Christ, is the true Honor, this doeth inuest a man into that royaltie which is in the Person of Christ, and maketh him both to bee an heire of the Earth, and to haue a title of inheritance into heauen.

The third obseruation hence standeth thus: That whereas Christ, albeit of *Dauids stocke*, and heire apparant to the crowne, came notwithstanding when the outward

glorie

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glorie of the kingdome was vtterly gone, therefore *The kingdome of Christ is no earthly kingdome. My kingdome* (said he himselfe to Pilate.) *is not of this world*^a. Heere-upon was his withdrawing, when the people sought him to *make him king*^r, and his refusal when he was requested, to determine a case of inheritance betwixt two brethren^a, and his charge to his Apostles, not to bee as *the Lords of the Gentiles*^b. It is one of the Iewes errors to thinke otherwise, and his Disciples were long caried away with that conceit; for euen at the point of his ascension, they propounded him a question that way: *Lord wilt thou at this time restore the kingdome to Israel*^c? But Christ came purposely when the *Scepter was departed from Indah*^d, to shew that he came to effect a spirituall deliuerance, and not to erect an outward state.

This warneth vs, not to affect nor embrace the profession of Christianitie, as a condition of outward greatnesse. Our Sauour must not be followed as a great Lord, to grant vs Leases, and Farmes, and good preferment in the world: these things must not be expected: We must follow him rather as one contemned, as the reproch of the world, as *a man full of sorrowes*^e. When *Zebedeus sonnes* (dreaming of an outward state) were suters to Christ to haue some place of respect about him: Christ presently (to put that conceit out of their heads) told them of *drinking of the cup, which he was to drinke of*^f, that is, of partaking with him in his affliction; shewing how much they are deceiued which looke for worldly aduancement by his seruice. True it is, he is able to bestow outward honors vpon his followers, (for *the earth is his, and all that therein is*^g), & he doth often also giue them to those that feare him: But yet they must not be held as matters annexed to the state of a Christian, as though euerie one that hath them, were by and by a good Christian, and hee which hath them not, were to bee reputed as no good seruant vnto Christ. For *the fatnesse of the earth was giuen as well to Esau as to Iacob*^h,

^a Ioh. 18. 36.^r Ioh. 6. 15.^a Luk. 12. 13.^b Math. 20. 25. 26.^c Act. 1. 6.^d Gen. 49. 10.

The Vse.

^e Isay 53. 3.^f Math. 20. 22.^g Psal. 24. 1.^h Gen. 27. 39

¹ Luk. 16.
22. 23.

and it is possible for the begger to be carried by *Angels* into *Abrahams bosome*, when the soule of the rich man is condemned to *hell*. So that this is the thing we are taught, that seeing Christ, although he be a king, yet is no earthly king, therefore we betaking our selues to the seruice and profession of his name, should not make outward prosperity, and worldly things, the end of our hope, lest (so doing) we runne into one of these two extremities; either, if wee haue it not, to grow discouraged, and to be wearie of our profession; or if we haue it, to presume, that we are therefore highly in Gods fauour.

The 6. Doctrine.

The fourth point noted hence is this: *That outward greatnesse is of no value for spirituall vses.* Christ was raised to doe this great worke, and to be the *Horne of saluation*, out of the poore outward estate of *Dauids* house: Now if for the spirituall vse, any outward greatnesse had beene behoouefull, Christ would haue chosen a time when *Dauids* house was in the highest glorie, and not haue come now when the honour of it lay euen in the dust: And this was the reason why al things were purposely carried after a meane fashion. The place of his birth was not Ierusalem (the head citie of the kingdome) but Bethlehem: (*little among the thousands of Iudah*:) The house, not some great Gentlemans place about the town, but a common Inne; in the Inne; not the best lodging or fairest roome, but the stable; not laid in some rich cradle, but lapped vp in clouts, & thrust into a manger: The tidings of his birth brought first, not to the Scribes and great learned men, but to a few poore shepheards; himselfe followed not with any traine of note, but with men of the meanest ranke, contemned in his life, and euill entreated in his end.

^k Micah 5. 2.

The Vse.

This serues to put downe the great, rich and mightie men of the world, who doe so pride themselves in their greatnesse, their wealth, their fulnesse, their glorie, their abundance, that without these they suppose no great thing can bee effected: *They trust* (saith the Psalmist) *in their*

goods,

goods, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; yet a man can by no meanes redeeme his brother, he cannot give his ransom to God¹. Our Saviour in a poore despised estate, hath done that, which all the Monarchs and Politicians in the world, though they had laid all their wealth and wit together, could neuer haue brought to passe.

¹ Psal. 49. 6. 7.



THE FOURTH SERMON.

VERS. 70. *As he spake by the mouth of his holie Prophets, which were since the world began, saying, That he would, &c.*

THe euidence of this worke of mans redemption commeth now next to be spoken of. In which, these seuerall points must be handled. 1. That it is necessarie for the strengthening of a mans faith, to obserue the course and order and agreement of the Scripture. 2. That from the worlds beginning God foretold all things concerning Christ. 3. That that which was deliuered by their mouth was spoken by God. 4. What the sum is of that which they spake. Of these in their course.

So that the first doctrine now, is this: *That for the grounding and confirmation of Faith, it is needfull to note the order & agreement of the Scriptures.* For indeed, wherupon was Zecharie his faith built, but vpon the courses of holie writ? vpon the accomplishment of the ancient Prophets,

The 1. Doctrine.

^a Ioh. 5. 39.

^a Luc. 24. 27.

^o Act. 17. 3.

^p Act. 26. 22.

^q Math. 26. 56.

^r Mar. 14. 49.

^c Mark. 15. 28.

^e Math. 5. 12.

^u Gal. 4. 29.

The Use.

which he now beheld. He was able to say to himselfe; *This which I now see to come to passe, I am sure is no other, but that which formerly hath beene foretold; as the Prophets spake, so is it now fulfilled.* To this very thing Christ exhorts: *Search the Scriptures, they are they, which testifie of me*^a. By this he endeouored to settle his Disciples faith: *Hee began at Moses, and all the Prophets, and interpreted to them in all the Scriptures, the things which were written of him*^a. This was Pauls course for the establishing of his hearers: *Hee disputed by the Scriptures*^o; hee said *no other things, than those which Moses and the Prophets did say should come*^p. These and the like sayings were read often, *That the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled*^q, *This is done that the Scripture should bee fulfilled*^r, *Thus the Scripture was fulfilled*^s; which argueth the care and purpose which the Spirit of God had, to ground our iudgements vpon the Scripture. So in our times when we see the same things happen, which wee read in Scripture to haue hapned; when we see such things come to passe, as we find prophesied in Scripture, it is a great comfort, & a speciall strengthening vnto faith. *So did they to the Prophets, faith our Saviour*^t; so it was *Then, faith Paul*^u.

This sheweth what enemies they are to their own faith, and comfort, who are wilfully strangers in the Scripture. Thou saiest, thou doest beleue in Christ; but how knowest thou that hee is the Christ in whom thou must beleue; what assurance hast thou, that hee is the person promised? When Satan, or the doubtings of thine own hart shall thus sift thee, what certainty art thou able to allege? and what is become of thy faith, which is built vpon such a weake foundation? If thou didst dwell in an estate of land, of which thou couldest shew no better euidence, thou wouldest thinke to bee quickly shut out of doores. The Lord hath precisely set downe particulars, (such hath beene his care to establish our faith:) if wee let the Scripture lie like some needlesse Historie, turning ouer (as too

many

many doe) the cardes oftner than the leaues of the Bible, that wee might be able to say (as euery Christian ought) *Thus it is written, and thus I beleene*; well may wee talke of faith, but, that faith should be where there is such little experience in the rule and life & ground of faith (which is the Scripture) it is vnpossible. *These things were writtenthat we might beleene* *. Doest thou not know what is written, how shouldst thou then be able to beleene?

The second doctrine of the place is: *That God from the worlds beginning foretold by Prophets all things concerning Christ*. This is manifest out of the course of the place in hand, & is easily confirmed. First in generall, it is said, that vnto Christ *all the Prophets giue witness* ^y. Christ appealed to the Scriptures of the old Testament ^z, and in his discourse with the two disciples journeying to Emmaus, he found in euery of the prophets something touching himselfe ^a. Secondly, if any shall exactly peruse the old Testament, he shall finde euery specialty touching Christ distinctly set downe: as namely, when he should be borne ^b, where he should bee borne ^c, of what stocke ^d, of what kinde of woman ^e, what maner of person, both God ^f and Man ^g, how he should bee entertained ^h, for what end hee should come ⁱ, by whom he should be betraied ^k, what maner of death he should die ^l, how he should be vsed in his execution ^m, where he should be buried ⁿ, how long hee should abide in the graue ^o, that he should rise from death ^p, that he should ascend into heauen ^q. These & many more circumstances than these, the Prophets from the worlds beginning did set downe very exactly: so that there was nothing befell Christ from the first moment of his conception, vntill the last period of his time heere on earth, (I meane of those things which are reuealed to haue befallen him; and which befell him as our Mediatour) of which a man experienced in the Scripture might not truely saie, *Thus and thus it hapned, as the Lord spake by his Prophets, &c.* Besides the ceremonies in the Temple and Taberna-

* Ioh. 20. 31.

The 2. Doctrine.

^y Act. 10. 43.

^z Ioh. 5. 39.

^a Luk. 24. 27.

^b Gen. 49. 10.

^c Mic. 5. 2.

^d Psal. 132. 11.

^e Isay 7. 14.

^f Isay 19. 6.

^g Gen. 3. 15.

^h Isay 53. 2.

3. &c.

ⁱ Isa. 61. 1. 2. 3.

^k Psal. 41. 9.

^j Numb. 21. 9.

with Ioh. 3.

14.

^m Psal. 22. 21.

large.

ⁿ Isay 53. 9.

^o Ioh. 1. 17.

with Math.

12. 40.

^p Psal. 16. 10.

^q Psal. 68. 18.

with Eph.

4. 8.

Heb. 13. 8.

Ioh. 20. 31.

The Vse.

cle, in the daily Sacrifices and Sacrificers, all of them shadowing out something or other in the Christ to come, who was the substance of euery type, and the bodie of euerie representation. It is woorthy any mans paines to marke and obserue how the whole mystery of Christ is lapped vp in the Prophecies of the old Testament, and how the same is explained, laid open and vnfolded in the storie and application of the new: The pith and marrow and substance of both being this, *Iesus Christ, yesterday, to day, and the same for euer*. The reason heereof on Gods part is twofold: First the confirmation of our Faith: *These things were written that we might beleene*. Our faith by this course is strengthened after this maner: we see by this exact foretelling of the Prophets, that the whole course of our saluation is a matter framed by God, and the whole order thereof in euery part and limme set downe in his eternall wisdom and prouidence: out of which wee may gather and conclude the certeintie thereof, inasmuch as a plot which God hath laid, all the power of Sathan cannot alter. Secondly, many base wrongs, many vile vsages, and indignities befell our Sauour in the daies of his flesh, the consideration whereof might make a man to doubt whether he could be the Sauour of mankind. But when we see that euerie such specialtie is foretold by the Prophets, and so, that nothing came to passe but according to Gods appointment, and that for some speciall end, that doubt is remooued, and those particulars of his debasement, become grounds of comfort and of reioicing vnto vs.

Now (for a vse of this doctrine) wee see heere (as in a glasse) the care which God hath had in all ages, from the verie cradle (as it were) of the world, for the good and comfort of his Church. Hee hath not kept a word backe which might be for the necessarie information thereof. Euerie age hath beene furnished with Prophets, and euerie prophet furnished with gifts, to instruct the Church in the mysterie of Christ. It is a true saying, that *the Lord did*

still

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still reveale his secrets to his servants the Prophets^a; And the Prophets were all (like Moses) faithfull in all Gods house^a, and like Paul, they kept nothing backe that was profitable, but shewed all the counsell of God^a. Wherefore may not God then say, as of old, *What could I haue done anie more?* If wee now remaine ignorant and vnsetled in religion, ready to bee caried about with euery winde of doctrine^a, Where is the fault, and against whom will yee plead? God hath not beene wanting to vs, neither yet is: but heere is the miserie of it, and that which will make hell euen readie to burst with damned soules: *My people will not heare my voice, Israel will none of me^a. Light is come, but men loue darknes more than light^b*. The Sermons of the Prophets are recorded, read, expounded, but we will not heare them: we say rather with those wicked ones, *Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy waies^c*. Let vs remember what is said, *Unto whomsoeuer much is giuen, of him shal be much required^d*. We haue the mystery of Christ, foretold by the Prophets, explained by the Euangelists, applied and enforced by the writings of the Apostles, pressed neerer to vs and made more familiar by continual preaching; our ignorance is without excuse, our blood will be vpon our owne heads, our portion will bee deeper in the pit of hell, than the Indians and Moores and Tartars, which neuer had the like meanes of spirituall information.

The third instruction stands thus; *That that which was uttered by the mouth of the Prophets God spake*: so are the words: *As he spake by the mouth, &c.* The mouth of the Prophets deliuered those things, but it was by direction and inspiration from aboue. So it is generally said of all the hoie Writ: *Holy men spake as they were moued by the Holie Ghost^e. All Scripture is giuen by inspiration of God^f. In the old time God spake by the Prophets^g. I will bee with thy mouth, said God to Moses^h. I haue put my words in thy mouth, to Jeremyⁱ. The word of the Lord was in my toong, said Dauid^k. The Holie Ghost spake by the mouth of Da-*

^a Amos 3. 7.^a Heb. 3. 5.^a Act. 20. 20. 27.^a Isay 5. 6.^a Ephes. 4. 14.^a Psal. 81. 11.^b Ioh. 3. 19.^c Iob. 21. 14.^d Luk. 12. 48.

The 3. Doctrine.

^e 2 Pet. 1. 21.^f 2 Tim. 3. 16.^g Heb. 1. 1.^h Exod. 4. 12.ⁱ Ier. 1. 9.^k 2 Sam. 23. 2.

¹ Act. 1. 16.^m 2. Cor. 5.
20.ⁿ 2. Pet. 1. 19.^o Act. 26. 27.^p Rom. 16. 26.^q Luk. 16. 29.^r 2 Tim. 3. 16.^s Eph. 2. 20.^t Luk. 24. 45.^u Mat. 28. 20.

Three
things noted
touching the
Scriptures
by occasion
of this 3.
Doctrine.

^x Hof. 8. 12.

uid said Peter¹. God doeth beseech you through vs, saith Paul^m. These places shew, that the things vttered by these men, were not of their owne deuising, but came by speciall authoritie from aboue. For the making of the best profit by this point, let vs looke a little further into it. By the foretellings of the Prophets in this place, Zecharie (no doubt) vnderstandeth the old Testament, which is therefore called, *the Word of the Prophets*ⁿ, and, *The Prophets*^o, and, *The Scriptures of the Prophets*^p. They haue *Moses and the Prophets*, that is, *the Scriptures*^q. Now that which is heere said of the Prophets (that by *their mouth God spake*) is true also of those which wrote the New Testament, according to that saying, that *the whole Scripture is giuen by Inspiration of God*^r: and the Apostle speaking of the *Foundation of the Church*, maketh it to be both *Prophets* (the old Testament) and *Apostles*^s, the new Testament: the body and frame whereof, albeit it was not all compiled by Apostles, yet the doctrine was taught and preached by the Apostles, whose *vnderstanding Christ opened*^t, and with whom hee promised to be^u. So that it is true of all the writers of the holy Scriptures, that God spake by their mouthes. Whereupon touching the Scripture wee are heere taught three things.

The first is, the *Maiestie of it*. For how must not that needs bee full of Maiestie and of admirable excellencie which proceedeth out of the mouth of the most high? We see in experience when bookes come to our hands, which containe some briefes of the Orations and speeches of the King, how apt we be to carie an higher estimation of them, than of other ordinarie writings; and al is, because we measure the words by the worth and dignitie of the Author: so in the Scripture; it comming from a God of infinite Maiestie, there must needs be in it more than steps or prints of excellencie. Heereupon they are called, *the Great, or, Stately, or, honorable Things of the Law*^x. David cal-

leth

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leth them *the Wonders of the Law* ¹. The Law of God seemed to him so full of many admirable things, and the same so full of heavenly brightnesse and glorie, that his naturall eyes were euen dazled therewith, therefore hee desireth God to doe a cure vpon his sight, that hee may be able to behold them: *Open mine eyes, &c.* It is said of Christ, that *he taught as one hauing authoritie* ²; there was another maner of state in his words, than in the Verball Sermons and Lectures of the Scribes; And so (who-soeuer shall obserue it,) shall see a kinde of Maiestie in the word of God reuealed in the Scripture, more than in any other writings.

- The vse heereof is, to admonish vs to beware of al slight and base and contemptuous vsing of Gods word. That which God hath spoken must needs be maiestticall. If the Scripture be such an euidence of his eternall and incomprehensible Maiestie, who shall dare to vse it without respect? The Maiestie of the Scripture is drawne sundrie waies into contempt: First, if it be in preaching handled negligently and irreuerently. Secondly, if the phrases and sentences of it be drawne into common speech: Thirdly, if it be heard, idlie, carelessly, scornfully, sleepily, which is the ordinarie indignitie offred to the Maiestie of Gods Word. If it were but one of *Esops* fables, or a tale of *Robin-hood*, it could not be heard with lesse respect, or with more disdain, than it is by many. Yet, euen *Eglon*, though but a Heathen, was better than such; who when hee was told by *Ehud*, that he had a message to him from God, rose out of his throne ³. When *Pilate* heard of hauing to doe with the *Sonne of God*, he trembled ⁴. Well then, when the Minister addresseth himselfe to the reading and to the opening of the Scriptures, remember wee, that that which wee shall heare is the voice of God: He speaketh by *Mans mouth*; let vs thinke with our selues how great Maiestie must needs be in his words; and let vs labour to make our behauiour in hearing, futable to the state and excellencie

¹ Pl. 119. 18² Matth. 7. 29

*The Vse of
the 1. note
touching the
Scripture.*

³ Iud. 3. 20.⁴ Ioh. 19. 8.

of that which is deliuered.

The second note touching the Scripture is the *Authoritie of it*. Is it Gods voice? Then of it selfe it is of sufficient credit, and needs no other testimonie to confirme it: It is also an absolute Iudge for the ouer-ruling of all doubts, and the determining of all cases and questions in Religion. For who is higher than God? when his mouth and word hath giuen the sentence, what exception shall wee make, or to whom shall wee appeale? Thus you see that heerupon is grounded the authoritie of the Scripture: of which authoritie of the Scripture you see also that there are two branches: One, that it is of sufficient credit to it selfe: The other, that it is in matters of Religion the supreme Iudge. Touching the first, wee haue this prooffe: *I receaue not* (saith Christ) *therecord of men*^c. His meaning is, that hee was of credit enough of himselfe, and needed no testimonie from any other, for the confirming of that which hee had deliuered. That which is true of Christ, is true of the word of Christ, which is the Scripture: It is the voice of God, and needs no other witnesse to avowe it. *If wee receiue* (saith S. Iohn) *the witnesse of men, the witnesse of God is greater*^d. There is none greater or more certaine, than the diuine testimonie. This is enough, *God hath spoken it*; where shall we haue a witnesse of better credit? Now for the supreme authoritie which the Scripture hath in iudging; it is the same in the Church that the Law is in the common-wealth: *To the Law* (saith God) *and to the testimonie*^e. Christ submitted his doctrine to the decision of the Scripture^f: So did Paul^g. An Vmpire for matters of Religion had need of three things. First, it must be of that nature, that we may bee assured that the verdict thereof is true. Secondly, it must be such, as from which it shall not be lawfull to appeale. Thirdly, it must be indifferent, and without partialitie. Now nothing hath these three properties but the Scripture, and therefore that onely is fit to bee the supreme Iudge in matters of Religion.

^c Ioh. 5. 34.

^d 1. Ioh. 5. 9.

^e Isay. 8. 20.

^f Ioh. 5. 39.

^g Act. 28. 23.

This

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This makes first against the Papists: Their opinion is, that the Authoritie of the Scripture dependeth vpon the Church, that is, that it is therefore Canonically and of Diuine credit and authoritie, because the Church, (that is, indeed, when the matter is well sifted, the Pope) hath so determined. This one place is sufficient to ouerthrow this fancie. The Scripture is the voice of God: shall not the voice of God bee of credit to it selfe? must men come in for a witness to iustifie that vnto vs which God hath said is true? God forbid. But, how shall I know (thou wilt say) that God hath spoken this or that? I answer; what, by the Church? Thou (perhaps) wilt say so: but I demand; How shall I know, which is the Church? The Church must prooue it selfe by the Scripture, and therefore the Scripture hath not its dependance vpon the Church. Yet thou doest still vrge, how thou shalt know the Scripture to be the voice of God. I answer: By it selfe: Therefore it is often called *The Testimonie*^b; because it becometh a witness to it selfe. Thou shalt know it by the effects: it is *mightie in operation* &c^c, it will make thy heart to burne *within thee*^k. He that will not beleue this witness, will beleue none. It is the Churches Ministry which commends the Scripture, but it is not the Churches authority which maketh it to be Canonically. Another opinion of the Papists is, that the Scripture is not the absolute Iudge in matters of Religion, but the Church, that is, by their interpretation, sometimes, the consent of the Fathers; sometime, the decree of a generall Councell; sometime the verdict of the Pope, whose faith cannot faile. They accuse the Scripture to bee obscure, imperfite, the matter of contention, and therefore vnfit to bee a Iudge. But if that be true which is heere, that the Scripture is the voice of God, who shall be more fit to determine? But (thou saiest) how shall we be certaine of the sense? I answer: The Scripture is the interpreter of it selfe, as the Law of the Land is of it selfe: The Scripture is *Light*^l: As we see the light by the

*The Vse of
the 2. note
touching the
Scripture.*

^b Isay 8. 20.

^c Heb. 4. 12.

^k Luk. 24. 32.

^l Psal. 119.
105.

^m This is
the meaning
of the word
συμβιβάζω.
Act. 9. 22.

ⁿ 1 Tim. 4. 12.

light, to the Scripture by it selfe. Who shall iudge what is Gods meaning but him selfe? Scripture with Scripture must be conferred ^m, and that is the way to find the truth. Secondly, this point may be fitly applied to our own occasions: There is betwixt vs and our Teachers controuersie about sundry things: These and these things are vrged and perswaded, as good & necessary: such and such things are cried out vpon, as euill and vngodly. The Preacher draweth one way by exhortation, we draw cleane contrary by our conuersation. He saith we must doe thus and thus, we thinke it to be more than needs: He saith this or that is a grosse sinne, and will bring vs to hell if we continue in it; we suppose there is no danger in committing it. Heere is now a question, and by whom shall it bee decided? If we will haue a Iudge which is able to giue an absolute verdict, let vs appeale to the Scripture, let vs hearken what God saith; where shall wee finde a more sufficient arbitrator? Hee is the onely *Law-giuer* ⁿ of his Church. Euerie action, euery course must stand or fall at his determining. And where or whence shall we know what his will is, but in the Scripture? The Prophets and Apostles haue written and spoken, but God *spake by their mouths*: I would we could bee perswaded to yeeld to the Lords verdict reuealed in the Scripture: What a notable reformation of sundry grosse euils would soone ensue? Touching those things which wee goe about to perswade, as, diligence in the worship of God, care to heare and to profit by the Word, sanctifying the Sabbath, Chastitie, Sobrietic, Mercie, Peaceablenesse and such like, sure we are, we haue the Scripture on our sides, and men haue nothing but humour, and custome, and obstinacie to oppose. If wee will not yeeld to the iudgement of the Scripture now for our conuersion, we shall ere long be forced to yeeld vnto it for our confusion.

The third thing touching the Scripture noted hence, is the *Trueth of it*: which followeth from hence necessarilie.

God

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God is the *God of Truth*^o. How can there bee any vn-trueth in that which hee hath deliuered? I remember that for confirmation this doeth often come in, *The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it*^o. Heerupon are those commendations of the word of God: *The iudgements of the Lord are truth*^o; *Thy word is truth*^o; *The word of truth, which is the Gospel*^o. And not without cause: For there is nothing related in it as done, but it was so, as is reported, with euerie circumstance: There is nothing mentioned as a matter to be done, but it shall so come to passe, as is foretold. *It is more easie that heauen and earth should passe away, than that one tittle of the Law should fall*^o. This is also a needful note. It is probable, that the greatest part of men doe not thinke, that there is that absolute trueth and certaintie in the scripture: but that they doe suppose it rather to bee an idle tale, or frightfull sound to amaze fooles, full of terrible threatnings, but yet lighter than vanitie in performance. Therefore it is meet to hold this firme, that the Scripture is the voice of him who cannot lie; Euery curse written in it shall fall vpon the vnrepentant; and euery blessing promised therein, shall be made good to the soule of euery true beleeuers.

The fourth generall point in this part touching the Euidence of redemption is, *What the Prophets spake*: Where we haue to note two things: 1. The summe of that which God by the Prophets promised to doe by Christ, *verse 71*. 2. The inducement or reason moouing God so to doe, *vers. 72. 73*.

Concerning the first, wheras mention is made of *enemies and haters*, we must inquire what and who they be. Touching their nature in generall, they are spirituall Enemies, or enemies in spiritual things, or for spirituall respects^o. The chiefe of them is Sathan; He was the first, and is therefore stiled, *A murderer from the beginning*^o, and an *Old Serpent*^o: hee desireth vs to winnow vs^o, and walketh about seeking to deuoure^o. Another enemy is sinne, a dangerous

^o Psal. 31. 5.*See the*^o Isay 1. 20. and elsewhere.^o Psal. 19. 9.^o Ioh. 17. 17.^o Col. 1. 5.^o Luk. 16. 17.*The Use of the 3. note touching the Scripture.*^o Eph. 6. 12.^o Ioh. 8. 44.^o Reu. 12. 9.^o Luk. 22. 31.^o 1. Pet. 5. 8.

^b 1. Pet. 2. 11.

^c Gal 5. 17.

^d 1. Cor. 15. 26

^e Verse 53.

^f Ioh. 15. 19.

^g Ioh. 16. 33.

^h Math. 24. 9.

ⁱ 1. Ioh. 3. 8.

^k Col. 1. 13.

^l Col. 2. 15.

^m 1. Cor. 15.

56. 57.

ⁿ 1. Cor. 15.

54.

^o Ioh. 16. 33.

^p 2. Cor. 5.

21.

^q Heb. 2. 14.

enemie, lurking in our bosome, and still labouring the ruine and ouerthrow of the soule: *It fighteth against the soule^b, and lusteth against the spirit^c.* A third enimie is death, so entitled by the Apostle^d, and is therefore said to haue a *Sting^e*, by which it wounds the soule, and bringeth it within the compasse of eternall misery. A fourth enimie is the world; that is, wicked, vnregenerate, godlesse men. These be the enemies and haters of Gods people. *The world hateth you, saith our Sauour to such^f; and, In the world you shall haue affliction^g; and, Yee shall be hated of all nations for my names sake^h.* Now let vs also see how true this is, that Christ bringeth *Deliuernance* from these *Enemies*: First, for *deliuernance* from Sathan, it is plaine: *For this purpose appeared the Sonne of God, that hee might loose the works of the diuellⁱ; and, God hath deliuered vs from the power of darknesse^k; Christ hath spoiled the principalities and powers^l.* Secondly, for *deliuernance* from sinne, the words are expresse: *The sting of death is sinne, &c. But thanks bee to God that hath giuen vs victorie, through our Lord Iesus Christ^m.* Thirdly, for *deliuernance* from death; *Death* (saith the Apostle) *is swallowed up into victorieⁿ.* Lastly, touching *deliuernance* from the World: *Be of good comfort* (saith our Sauour) *I haue overcome the World^o.* Let vs proceed yet further and enquire into the maner of this *deliuernance*: Concerning which, I will briefly open two things. 1. The substance and ground of the *deliuernance*: 2. The maner of declaring it. The ground of the *deliuernance* is the merit of Christs death. Hee was *made sinne^p*, and so died, and in death encountred with him, *who had the power of death, the diuell^q.* By being made sinne, hee tooke away sinne, by dying hee ouercame death: sinne being abolished, and death subdued, the kingdome of the diuell was vtterly ouerthrowne. As for the maner of declaring and manifesting this *deliuernance*, it is either in this life, or heereafter. In this life he deliuereth from Satan, by restraining his rage, by limiting his malice,

by

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by not giuing vs ouer to his assaults : *I haue praied that thy faith faile not* ^r. He deliuereth from sinne, by sanctifying vs by his spirit, by killing the strength of our corruption, by transforming vs more and more into the image of God. *Sinne shall not haue dominion ouer you* ^r. He deliuereth from death, by taking away the naturall feare of it, by assuring that it shall be a passage into glorie. Thus *Paul* knew, that *being loosed* he should *be with Christ* ^r. He deliuereth from the world, by ordering the rage of euil men, by giuing constancy to maintaine and professe the truth vnto the death. *To you it is giuen to suffer for his sake* ^u. In the day of iudgement he will further manifest this *deliuerance*; for then all *teares shall be wiped away, there shall be no more death, &c* ^x. The diuell, with all his angels and wicked instruments, shall bee sent away eternally into hell. *The God of peace shall tread Sathan under our feete shortly* ^r. Many things might heere be handled, as of the Excellencie of our redemption, farre exceeding that of *Moses, Deborah, Gedeon* and others; of our securitie, who hauing so many enemies, yet take no thought to withstand them, and such like points: But the chiefe thing obseruable heere, is *The certainty of the saluation of Gods chosen*. If any thing could endanger them and worke their ruine, it must be one of these foure, Sathan, Sinne, Death, the World; no fift can be thought vpon: But none of these foure can. The reason is; It was Gods intent, by Christ to deliuer them from all these: Thinke wee that God did faile in the prosecuting his intent? did he either not follow it, or in following it, did he not accomplish it? Farre be it from vs so to thinke. Hence commeth that boasting vsed by the Apostle: *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods chosen? Who shall condemne? Who shall separate vs from the loue of Christ* ^r &c. Sathans head broken, sinne destroyed, death swallowed vp, the world vanquished, the happiest and most absolute victory that euer was.

This is a point of much comfort to all the godly. Sathan

G

rageth,

^r Luc. 22. 32.^r Rom. 6. 14.^r Phil. 1. 23.^u Phil. 1. 29.^x Reue. 21. 3.^r Rom. 16. 20.*The 4. Doctrine.*^r Rom. 8. 32. 33-34.*The Use.*

^a Heb. 12. 2.^b Heb. 2. 10.^c Pro. 3. 8.^d Pro. 14. 9.

rageth, sinne striueth, death looketh terrible, the world opposeth it selfe: fearefull are these things at the first beholding. Looke we to *Iesus the author and finisher of our faith*^a, the *Prince of our saluation*^b: he hath to euery of these giuen their mortall wound, and they shall neuer preuaile against any of his chosen. This doctrine is *health to the nauell, and marrow to the bones*^c, Yet, lest any should abuse it, remember that one of the enemies is sinne, and one of the deliuerances from sinne, is from the dominion thereof. A slaue to sinne, a seruant to his owne lusts, he which maketh *a mocke of sinne*^d, he that taketh to himselfe the liberty of grosse euils, such a one hath no right vnto this comfortable deliuerance; his condemnation (without speedy repentance) is as sure, as the saluation of the elect is certaine.



THE FIFTH SERMON.

VERS. 72. *That he might shew mercy towards our Fathers, and remember his holy Covenant.*

73. *And the oth which he sware to our Father Abraham.*



Ow followeth the inducement or Reason moouing God to vouchsafe this great *Deliuernance*: and that was, the manifestation and discouerie of two things. 1. His mercie: *That hee might shew mercy, &c.* 2. His truth: *And remember his holy Covenant, &c.*

In the former of these, two things must

The 1. Doctrine.

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must bee handled. 1. *That the worke of Redemption by Christ, was intended by God, as it were a stage, in which the Fulnesse and euen the riches of his mercy might be seene.* 2. A question, how this worke now wrought (as it were) in the worlds last quarter, might be said to be a worke of mercy to the *Fathers*, who liued in the prime daies of the world, long before Christ was exhibited in the flesh.

To manifest the first of these two, this first is in generall to bee noted, that the Elect of God, which are redeemed by Christs precious blood, are called *Vessels of mercy*^e: because in the eternal counsel of God they were chosen to this end, that the Lord might *declare the riches of his glorie*, and that their saluation might be to *the praise of the glorie of his grace*^f. The Lord intending a memorable instance of his vnspeakable mercy, chose some in Christ, to be redeemed from eternall slauerie by his death. Secondly it is woorthy the obseruing, that the whole worke of our saluation is called by this one word *Mercy*^g. The reason is, because to which part soeuer of it we cast our eies, we shall see more than prints and footesteps of his grace; the whole frame of it, is (as it were) made of mercy. If wee begin at the foundation of all, (Gods eternall election) and passe downe along by the period and full point of all (the glory which shall be shewed heereafter) and aske from what root ech part did spring, this one *mercy*, must bee the sum of euery answer: There was *mercy* in chusing; *mercy* in sending Christ; *mercy* in calling vs; *mercy* in iustifying vs, and what can it be but *mercy*, that we shall be admitted to an *Inheritance immortall and undefiled*^h? *Mercy* the beginning, *mercy* the progresse, the conclusion *mercy*. In discoursing heereof the burden of our song must still bee like that of the Psalme, *For his mercy endureth for euer*ⁱ. This very same thing, is shewed in that parable of the Prodigall. In the whole passage therof, we shall see nothing but the fruits of exceeding *mercy*: *He ranne and fell on his necke, he kissed him, he commanded to bring foorth the best robe, and*

* Rom. 9. 23.

* Eph. 1. 6.

* 1. Pet. 2. 10.

* 1. Pet. 1. 4.

* Psal. 136. 1.
&c.

¹ Luc. 16. 20.
&c.

The 1. Vse.

¹ 1. Sam. 5. 3.

^m 2. Kin. 4.
39. 40.

² Gen. 26. 15.

to kill the fat calfe, &c^m: What was heere but *mercy*? The same is true in the dealing of God the Father with those to whom hee is reconciled in his Sonne: Christ being for them made sinne, fees the edge of his iustice; but they, being made righteous through Christ, enioy the fulnelle of his mercy.

This is, first, matter of information and of settlement in the truth. For heere we see, against the Papists, that in the whole worke of mans redemption by Christ, there is no footing left for humane merit. Light and darknes, God & the diuell are not in a more direct line of opposition either to other, than *mercy* and *merit*: It is vnpossible that these two should admit any composition. It is said by Philosophers, that in lower degrees, contraries may haue some concurrence: as light and darknes in the twilight: But take two contrarie qualities, and let one of them be in the height and full strength, there is no possibilitie of place for the other. So then, seeing in the worke of saluation, the Lord hath intended to make shew, not of some parcels (as it were) but of the verie fulnesse of his *mercy*, there is no more roome for *merit*, than there was for *Dagon* before the *Arke* of *Iehouah*¹. I remember what is said of him that went into the field to gather herbes, hee found a wilde gourd, and shred it into the pottage: But when the pottage came to be tasted, the eaters cried out, *Death is in the pot*^m. Such cookes the Papists are: they take vpon them to make readie a potion of comfort, for a perplexed soule; but when they temper with this herbe of *Grace*, the leaues of this wilde gourd of humane *merit*, which neuer grew in the Lords garden, or at least was neuer planted by him, but crept in (as a weed) by the negligence of the dressers, they haue giuen occasion to make the same crie, *Death is in the pot*, and with it they haue poisoned a world of soules, and haue dealt as iniuriously with the Church of God, as the Philistims did with *Izrahak*, when they stopped and filled up with earth all his Welles²; so with this earthly trash they

The Fifth Sermon.

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they haue choaked vp the *Fountaine of Grace*, that it cannot streame out comfortably, for the refreshing of the wearied soules of Gods people. Thus (as *Iob* said to his friends) they haue *forged lies*, and by that meanes are *Physicians of no value*. ¹

° Zach. 13. 1.

° Iob 13. 4.

Neither is this to be obserued only because of Papists, but euen because of the common people, inasmuch as the doctrine and opinion of *Merit*, (that is, of doing somewhat whereby to further our owne saluation) is grauen as with an *iron pen*, in the tables of euery naturall heart. Experience sheweth, that the sowrenesse of this Popish leauen remaineth in many: *Good prayers, and good doings; meane well, and doe well*; these and the like are the slaues they leane vnto. It is said, that the children of the Iewes which married wiues of *Ashdod*, *spake halfe in the speech of Ashdod*: Such is the religion of many: Talke with them of saluation, they speake halfe popishly, and halfe soundly: They will speake of *mercy* and *grace*, and seeme to magnifie and esteeme it; yet something of their owne shall be brought in too, and a man shall haue somewhat adoe before he can coniure out this diuell, and bring them to an absolute dependance vpon the freedome of Gods mercie. Remember we then the doctrine of this place: God intended the mysterie of Christ, in which to set out to the full, the vnsearchable riches of his mercie; to couple with it ought els, more or lesse, is iniuriously to darken the beautie of that which the purpose of God was to haue to be seene and beheld in whole without impeachment.

° Ier. 17. 1.

° Neh. 13. 24.

*Cytheria q. d. furti modo
capitula
multo iam prior*

Secondly, this doctrine is a matter of comfort. There cannot be a matter of greater security to the soule of a Christian, than to laie his whole hope vpon Gods mercy. The reason is, because the mercy of God is (as himselfe) infinite, eternall, and vchangeable. Where shall I finde a more certaine refuge? When I see a plaister as large as my fore, there is my comfort. The perplexed conscience groaning vnder the weight of sinne, and panting for grace,

The 2. Use.

is the fittest Iudge in points of this nature. Well then, let a mans *Bones be full of the sinne of his youth*^c, let his *heart be broken with one breaking vpon another*^e, let his conscience be set vpon the racke, the *Lord writing bitter things against him*^a; you will tell him of the mercy and grace of God. You doe well: but you will adde withall, that his comfort in this must be cyked out with something of his owne: Hee must crie out vpon you as *Iob* did vpon his friends, *Miserable comforters yee are all*^x. Hee will see such *weaknesse*, such *scantnesse*, such *maimednesse*, such *imperfection* in his best performances, that hee will not dare to bring them into a reckoning before God, yea the verie thought of them, will but adde affliction to his griefe. Thus will his comfort *consume like a rotten thing, and as a garment that is moth-eaten*^y. But teach him to build all vpon Gods mercy, labouring that nothing of his owne may be once thought vpon in this busines, hee shall straight see such a *breadth and length, depth and height*^z of comfort, which will bee as *colde waters to his wearie soule*^a. Thus this doctrine is matter of instruction to ground vs in knowledge, and matter of refreshing to furnish vs with comfort. The soule of a Christian is as the *Dove* which went out of *Noahs Arke*^b; It findes no footing but vpon the rocke of Mercy; and it is but an imagination of mercie when any thing is coupled thereunto. This truth hath forced euen the greatest aduersaries to acknowledge it; according as wee finde, that no meane Papist, after long labouring against the doctrine of Iustification by only Faith, doeth in the end confesse, that yet it is the safest way to place a mans trust vpon Gods onely mercy and fauor^c.

The next matter to be treated is the Question; *How the worke of Redemption wrought by Christ, can be said to be a worke of mercy to the Fathers?* For the resolving of this question, this is to be knowne, that there is but one way of saluation to the *Fathers* before and vnder the Law, and to vs which haue liued since the reuelation of Christ in the flesh

^c Iob 20. 11.^e Iob 16. 14.^a Iob 13. 26.^x Iob 16. 2.^y Iob 13. 28.^z Eph. 3. 18.^a Pro. 25. 25.^b Gen. 8. 9.^c Bellar. lib. 5.

de Iustif. c. 7.

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flesh: *Iesus Christ, yesterday, to day, the same for ever*^d. Heereupon Christ is said to be the *Lambe slaine from the beginning of the world*^e: whereof this is the meaning, that albeit he was manifested in the flesh in the latter end of the world, and not slaine before, yet all the holy men and women, euen from *Adam*, were saued by his blood. The most persons of note vnder the Law, were types of Christ, and all their sacrifices and ceremonies tended to this one thing, to cherish in them the hope of the Messias; and to acquaint them with the whole myserie of Redemption, which was wrought by his meanes. There is not one little circumstance in the carriage of our saluation by Christ, but the same was shadowed out in the ancient complements of the Law: Euen *Abraham saw the day of Christ*^f. To them that liued before Christ, Christ was crucified in the Sacrifices and bloodsheddings of the Law; *among vs he is crucified*^g by the preaching of the Gospell: They beleueed on Christ to come; we beleuee on Christ already come. *Zecharie* therefore doth heere mention the *Fathers*, to teach, *That the efficacie of Christs death is not restrained or limited to one point of time, but is stretched euen to the ages by-past, and that the Fathers from the beginning of the world came within the compasse of this mercy which God shewed to mankind in Christs incarnation*: And this to bee true hath beene prooued in the opening and clearing of this question: *Paul* said, that the Christian Religion which hee professed, was the *Hope of the promise which God made to the Fathers*^h; and *Peter* in his Oration made in the Synode at Ierusalem, speaking of *beleueing to be saued through the grace of the Lord Iesus Christ*, ioyneth the *Fathers* with them who then liued; *We beleuee, euen as they*ⁱ.

This is first, matter of Resolution in a needfull doubt. I am taught if I will be saued, to beleuee onely in Christ Iesus; the Ministry of the word doeth still (like *Iohn Baptist*) point out him vnto me, as the onely person which taketh away the sinnes of the World^k, it saith, that he is the *only way*^l;

^d Heb. 13. 8.^e & ^f Reu. 13. 8.^f Ioh. 8. 56.^g Gal. 3. 1.

The 2. Doctrine.

^h Act. 26. 6.ⁱ Act. 15. 10.
11.

The 1. Use.

^k Ioh. 1. 29.^l Ioh. 14. 6.

^a Act. 4. 12.

^a Act. 3. 21.

^o Exo. 25. 18.
&c.

The 2. Vse.

^p Psa. 68. 13.

^q Psa. 78. 72.

^r 1. Sam. 18.
18.

^s Math. 8. 11.

and that there is *no saluation in any other*^m. It telleth mee moreouer, that this Christ was crucified manie hundred yeeres since, and that now in respect of his bodie, *Heauen must containe him*ⁿ, till the end of all things. But now heere my faith wauereth and is in doubt, asking how his blood, which was shed so long since, can bee of force for the purging and cleansing of my sinne. This scruple is taken away by considering that which is heere said: *Zecharie* affirmeth, that the *mercy* of God in Christ, did concerne euen the *Fathers*, which had long before gone the way of all flesh, and which were asleepe in the dust of the earth. Now then, looke how the *Fathers*, so long before might haue benefit by his death to come, by the same means may we now so long after receaue comfort by his death past. By faith they beheld Christ to be offered, and are now entred into rest: by faith we may also looke backe vpon Christ already sacrificed, and be admitted into the fellowship of eternall happinesse. The two *Cherubins* placed at the two ends of the *mercie-seat*, had their *Faces one to another*^o, and both vpon the Arke: So the age by-past, and the age after, looke either on the other, but both vpon Christ.

Secondly, this is matter of much contentment to a true beleuer. For heere he may see, that be he neuer so poore, or despised, or base, though he lie *among the pots*^p, or bee *behinde the Ewes with yoong*^q, yet he is by Christ called into the fellowship, and partaking of the same saluation, which the holie *Fathers* and *Prophets* doe now enioy; *Adam*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Moses*, &c. these were woorthy men, and in great account with God. How truly maist thou say with *Dauid*^r, *What am I, that I should enioy that mercy* which God hath prepared for them? In such a maner doeth our Sauour describe the happinesse of the saued; *They shall sit downe with Abraham, Izhak and Iacob in the kingdome of Heauen*^s, and it is one circumstance of the torment of the wicked: *ye shall see*

Abraham,

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Abraham, Izhak and Iacob and all the Prophets in the kingdome of heauen, and your selues thrust out at doores^a. What shall then become of vs, who neglect so great saluation^a? Who, when God hath promised such glorious things^a for vs, euen the same saluation and mercy which the chiefest of his Saints do now enioy, yet had rather be malicious with *Cain*; tyrannizing with *Nimrod*; profane with *Esaü*; scoffing with *Ishmael*; extorters with *Ahab*; proud with *Iesabel*; superstitious with *Ieroboam*; catching with *Iudas*; playing the belly-gods with *Dines*; resisting the trueth with *Elymas*; rayling with *Rabshakeh*; murmuring with *Core*; vicious with the *Sodomites*; (of which persons we haue no other testimonie, but that they are reserved in euermlasting chaines under darknesse vnto the iudgement of the great day^c;) than seeke to raigne with *Abraham, Izhak, Iacob*, and the Prophets. If wee desire the same happinesse, wee must goe by the same way. It is vnpossible to haue the *Pleasures of sinne*^a, and the *Felicitie of the chosen*^a too.

The other thing which God intended to make knowen in the worke of our Redemption, is his *Truth*. To remember his holy conenant, and the oth &c. Heere wee must treat touching this *Holy Conenant*, what it is, and how it was confirmed by an *Oth*: and then next, how God can bee said to bee mindfull of his *Conenant* and *Oth*. As for the former, we all know the nature of a *Conenant*. By it heere are meant those Articles of agreement which are betwixt God and man concerning life eternall. The substance of this *Conenant* is, *I will be thy God, and thou shalt be my people*. This *Conenant* is twofold. The one of Works, the condition whereof is, perfect Obedience. The other of grace, of which the condition is Faith^b. These two covenants are one: they differ in maner of dispensation, the one being in types and shadowes after a more obscure manner, and called *The old Conenant*: the other being more plaine and perspicuous, deliuered after a new fashion, and

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therefore

^a Luk. 13. 28^a Heb. 2. 3.^a Psal. 87. 3.^c Iude 6.^a Heb. 11. 25^a Psal. 106. 5.^b Ioh. 1. 12.

1. Cor. 3.

11.

2. Cor. 5. 19.

Gen. 22. 16.

Heb. 6. 17.

therefore called *The New*: But the summe of both, was and is, Christ Iesus: *No other foundation can be laid*: and it was euer a trueth, that *God was in Christ, reconciling the world vnto himselfe*¹. Now this couenant is called a *Holy couenant*, because it was made by a holy God, and tended vnto holinesse, both to make Christs holinesse to become ours, and to binde vs to shew foorth the fruits of holinesse in our liues. Touching the confirmation of it by an oth, (*By my selfe*, saith God. *I haue sworne*²), in it, briefly we must examine the qualitie of the oth: and the reason why God sware. The qualitie of the Oth is, *By himselfe*. The Lord doeth binde (as it were) his Godhead for the performance of that which he promiseth, as though hee should say, *If this be not so, let me be God no more*: Now for the other, it may bee indeed doubted, why God should sweare, seeing his word is certaine in it selfe and needs no confirmation: but we must know, that God sware not to win more credit to his promise, but he did it for the better confirmation of our faith, *being willing more abundantly to shew vnto vs the stablenesse of his Counsell*³.

Now for that, how God can be said to *remember his couenant and oth*, seeing God cannot forget, thus it must bee vnderstood: The long delaying of the actual performance of the promise touching the Messias, might giue occasion to some to thinke that God had vtterly forgotten it, and that it was but a verball promise without any purpose of accomplishment. But now (saith *Zecharie*) hee will fulfill all to the vtmost, and by so doing make it manifest, that whatsoeuer men might suppose, yet the performance of the Couenant was euer in his minde. The sense then of the whole place is this; that whereas God had freely and of his owne accord made a holie league with his church, grounding the same vpon Christ, and binding it (for better assurance) with an Oth, which notwithstanding because of the delaies of so many yeeres, might seeme to bee euen buried in forgetfulnesse, hee would now make knowne his

neuer

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neuer failing faithfulness, and shew to the world, that nothing of all that he had said, should fall to the ground vnfilled.

The doctrine here is, *the absolute and vchangeable certaintie of Gods promises*. One end of the incarnation of Christ was, that there might in it be an euidence giuen to the world, that the Lord neither could nor would be vnmindfull of his promise. *Iesus Christ was a Minister of the Circumcision for the truth of God, to confirme the promises made to the fathers*². *I will not falsifie my truth, my couenant will I not breake, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips*⁴. It was a worthie resolution of the Prophet, long before Christ was borne: *Thou wilt performe thy truth to Iacob, & mercy to Abraham, as thou hast sworne to our fathers in old time*¹. *God can not lie*^k, *nor denie himselfe*¹: *Thou art the same* (saith the Psalme^m): *I am the Lord, I change not*ⁿ. This is the reason he is called *Iehouah*, because as he giueth being to all things, and hath his owne being from himselfe; so he makes that to be which he hath promised.

Of this there is a double vse. First, here is much matter of vpholding for the faith of a Christian. God hath promised; that is much: he hath bound his promise with an oath; this is more. Hee hath sent his sonne in the fulnesse of time^o, in whom all his promises are *Yea and Amen*^p. What can be more absolute? The faith which is strengthened with this threefolde cord can not easily be broken. It is an olde custome of the diuell to lay siege to the truth of Gods word: *Yea, hath God indeed sayd*^q? So now, the main point that he laboureth in, is, That God will not be so good as his word, he will forget to be mercifull, and his promise will faile for euermore^r. To put backe this assault, remember this one instance of the manifestation of Christ: all promises had their reference to him. His birch and sufferings are left as an vndoubted pledge of the performance of whatsoever God hath spoken. We may say as the Apostle, *He that gaue vs Christ, how shall he not with him giue all things*

The 3. Doctrine.

^s Rom. 15. 8.
^h Psal. 89. 33.
34.

ⁱ Mica. 7. 20.

^k Tit. 1. 2.

^l 2. Tim. 2.

13.

^m Psal. 103.

27.

ⁿ Mal. 3. 6.

The 1. Vse.

^o Gal. 4. 4.

^p 2. Cor. 1. 20.

^q Gen. 3. 1.

^r Psal. 77. 8. 9.

¹ Rom. 8. 32.

The 2. Vse.

¹ Hof. 2. 23.

^u 1. Sam. 15.
13. 14.

^x Mal. 3. 8. 13.

^y Am. 2. 13.

^z Num. 15. 30.

¹ Jer. 8. 12.

^b Ifay 3. 9.

also¹? So, he that hath performed the promise concerning Christ, wherein shall he faile? He that hath kept his word in this, I will make no question of his truth in any thing.

Secondly (for a second vse) here is matter of very needfull aduertisement to vs all. Heere is mention made of the couenant of God, of the oath of God, and of the certaintie of both. This couenant consisteth of two parts: in the one God bindes himselfe to vs, to be our God; in the other we binde our selues to him, to be his people. *I will say to them, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God².* His is a couenant of mercy, ours is a couenant of obedience. He promiseth happinelle, we holinelle; he glory, we dutie: he hath tied himselfe by an oath, we haue bound our selues by the vow of baptisme. Will he be mindfull of his couenant, and shall we forget ours? Will not he alter, and shall we faile? Will not he trifle with vs, and shall we dally with him? God forbid. Yet, this faltring in that part of the couenant which concernes vs, is a common euill. The most of our liues rather argue a resolution to breake promise, than a purpose and endenour to performe it. *Blessed be thou of the Lord (said Saul to Samuel) I haue fulfilled the commandement of the Lord. But Samuel said, What meaneth then the bleating of the sheepe in mine eares, and the lowing of the oxen which I heare^u?* So, it is like enough, we will be readie to iustifie our selues; and when we are challenged for breach of promise, will be ready to say, like the gam-saying Iewes, *Wherin^x haue we trespassed?* But it shalbe sayd to vs, as it was to Saul, *What meane then these and these things?* If we make conscience of the couenant, what meane these grosse sinnes, which crie loud in the eares of the most high, and vnder which *hee is pressed, as a cart that is full of sheaues^y*, swearings, whoredomes, drunkennesse, oppressions, cruelties, contempt of the Word and Sacraments, and all these with an *High hand^z*; many being grown to that extremie that they cannot haue any shame¹: the very triall of their countenance testifieth against them^b?

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Is this our promise? Is this to be mindfull of our couenant? With what face can we lay claime to the couenant of *mercy*, when we shall be so manifestly conuicted to haue trodden vnder our feet the couenant of Obedience? How euer it be, God will keepe his word, but not of fauour, but of iustice, euen that which Moses speaketh of, enough to make *his two eares to tingle*^c, and *his bellie to tremble*^d that heareth it: *The Lord will not be mercifull vnto vs, but his wrath and ielousie shall smoke against vs, and euery curse that is written shall light vpon vs, and the Lord shall put out our name from vnder heauen*^e. This is their portion, which forget God and *deale falsly concerning his couenant*^f: this is the heritage that they shal haue of God for their workes^g. Remember then, as the substance of the couenant on Gods part, so the condition on ours: hee hath couenanted, so haue we: he hath sworne, so haue we also: he will not forget his part, let vs make conscience to remember ours.

^c 1. Sam. 3.

11.

^d Hab 3. 16.^e Deu. 29. 20.^f Psal. 44. 17.^g Iob 20. 29.

THE SIXTH SERMON.

VERS. 74. That he would grant vnto vs, that we being deli-
uered out of the hands of our enemies, should
serue him without feare &c. ^{serue him}
_{not feare}



E are now come to the last part of the work of our redemption, which is the end and drift therof; & which is also a branch of the Couenant which God made to the fathers, and a limme (as it were) of that good which he promised to bestow.

Touching this end, I will speake

H 3.

first,

first, generally; and then, more particularly I will discusse those things which doe necessarily concerne that maine duty, at which God aimed in vouchsafing vs so great a deliuerance by Christ Iesus.

The 1. Do-
ctrine.

^a Rom. 6. 18.

ⁱ Rom. 12. 1.

^k 1. Cor. 6.
20.

The general summe of this end of our redemption is, that *we being deliuered from our enemies should serue God.* Concerning these *enemies* who they are, and what is the *deliuerance* from them, I shall not neede to speake; these things were opened in the 71. vers. The sense and generall doctrine of the place is this; *That the purpose of God in freeing vs from the spirituall bondage in which we were by nature, was, that we should euen consecrate our selues, to the glorie and honor and seruice of himselfe.* This point is plaine in the words of this place, and easily to be further manifested by the Scripture. *Being made free from sinne, ye are made the seruants of righteousness^b:* that is, seeing the Lord hath dealt thus graciously with you, to rescue you by the death of Christ from the flauerie of sinne, this is that which is now expected of you, euen that you should deuote your selues to the practise of righteousness, being hencefoorth as zealous in good seruices, as yee haue formerly beene earnest and eager in fulfilling your own lusts, and in glutting your selues with the pleasures of sinne. Like to this is the reasoning of the same Apostle elsewhere in the same Epistle: *I beseech you by the mercies of God, that you giue up your bodies, &cⁱ.* He perswades vnto a godly life by propounding to vs the mercies of God. Now this kind of reasoning were of no force, were it not for this, namely, that the drift of all Gods mercy vnto vs in Christ, is, the drawing and recouering of vs from the seruice of Sathan, vnto the obedience and seruice of himselfe: Such is that speech of his in another place: *Yee are bought with a price, therefore glorifie God, &c^k,* as if hee had said, God hath redeemed you, therefore it standeth with equitie, and it is agreeing to his purpose and meaning, that you should serue him. Excellent is that place to Titus; *The grace of God &c. hath*

appeared,

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appeared, and teacheth vs, that we should denie vngodlinesse, &c. and that we should liue soberly &c. in this present world.

¹ Tit. 2. 11. 12.

The meaning is, that the doctrine of the Gospell (the sum whercof is, Redemption in and by Christ) is preached publickly vnto all, but not to encourage them to continue in sinne, but to vrge them to lay aside profanenesse, and to renounce their owne lusts, and to haue their fruit in holinesse, as they hope to haue their end, eternall life. For (saith the Apostle) *Christ gaue not himselfe for vs, that wee should the more boldly giue the raines to our owne lusts, but that we should be zealous of good works*. To these we may ioine that of S. Peter: *Pass the time of your dwelling beere in feare, knowing that wee were not redeemed with corruptible things, &c. but with the precious blood of Christ*.

^m Vers. 14.^a 1. Pet. 1. 17. 18. 19.

There he vseth the price of redemption as a speciall motiue to a religious life, inasmuch also as the drift thereof was to free vs from our vaine conuersation. Many particulars of this kind might be heaped vp: I will conclude this enumeration of places with the saying of David; *Thou hast (saith he) deliuered my soule from death, and also my feete from falling, that I may walke before God in the light of the liuing*. He makes the end of all the deliuerances which God had vouchsafed him, to be this one thing, that he might spend his daies in a sincere course in the sight of God. And indeed this is a matter of great equitie. *Who planteth a vineyard and eateth not of the fruit thereof?* And so; who will pay a price of Redemption for him, by whom he shall receaue no seruice? Gods wee are by the right of redemption: *Yee are not your owne* (saith Paul¹): we are bought with a price for his vse, therefore all which we can doe, is to be diuerred to his glorie.

^c Psal. 56. 13.^p 1. Cor. 9. 7.^q 1. Cor. 6. 19

Heereby it appeareth that the case is not so as the most suppose: The Gospell is no doctrine of carnall libertie, as though because of the abundance of mercy, and in respect that Christ hath performed sufficient for the presenting of vs without fault in Gods sight, and for the acquiting vs

The Use.

1 Rom. 3. 31.

1 Ephe. 2. 10.

from the guilt of al our sins, be they neuer so many or so great, therefore it might be lawfull for vs to liue after our owne will, and to giue liberty to our owne inordinate affections. No: the doctrine of the Gospell tieth vs to as strict termes of obedience, as the law. There is not any one holy dutie which in the Scripture God requireth of a Christian, from which the freedome of our being iustified by the grace of Christ, doeth giue vs any colour of dispensation. Fit to this purpose is the saying of the Apostle, after hee had largely disputed of our free iustification by Christ, & had proued that the works of the Law are of no force to deserue saluation; *Doe wee then (saith he) make the Law of none effect through Faith?* For so it might seeme to bee a matter indifferent whether wee doe well or no, and that the doctrine which hee had taught being true, there is no vse of the Morall Law. *God forbid (answereth the Apostle) yea we establish the Law*^r. The doctrine of grace is so farre from ouerthrowing the Law, that it bindes all which hope to bee saued to a more strait obedience: good works are *ordained* for them to walke in^r, and God hath therefore called them vnto grace, that he might be glorified by their pure conuersation. Let all profane ones consider this, all despisers of good things, swearers, Sabbath-breakers, wantons, drunkards, Libertines, &c. Such (some of them) doe pretend a faith in Christ, they will say they hope they are redeemed by him, and looke to be saued by his death. I aske of thee, who so hopest and yet liuest in the seruice of the diuell, and in bondage to thine owne lusts, what thinkest thou? Doest thou beleue that God did therefore send Christ, or, that Christ did therefore shed his precious blood, that men might take libertie thereby to enter into all maner of excesse? Did hee therefore raise vp an horne of saluation, that vnder hope thereof men might lay iniquitie to iniquitie, and then saue vp all with this, *I beleue in Christ, I know mine owne works cannot saue mee, &c.* God forbid, that any man should so imagine. It is plaine against

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the Scripture, and directly contrarie to the purpose of God in the worke of mans Redemption. Marke this place: God hath *visited, redeemed, raised up a horne of saluation;* &c. not to establish sinne, but to dissolue sinne, not to discharge vs from our obedience, but to binde vs vnto dutie. Therefore, either bee sure that thy settled resolution and purpose is, to mortifie and subdue thine owne corruption, and to sacrifice euen thy sweetest and best pleasing sinnes vnto God, and to limit thy selfe by all meanes within the compasse of Christian obedience, or els thou art one of those, of whom *S. Iude* speakes, which *art of old ordained to condemnation*¹; the benefit of redemption belongeth not to thee, thy *damnation sleepeth not*, and thy *iudgement long agoe is not farre off*². Thus much in generall touching the end of our redemption, to *serue God*.

¹ Iude 4.² 2. Pet. 2. 3.

Now follow the particulars appertaining to it, and they are these. 1. The partie from whom the power and grace to doe this, (to wit, to *serue and glorifie God*) must bee looked for; *That he would grant vs*. 2. The maner of so doing it; *without feare*. 3. The time to which the performance of this duty is tied; *All the daies of our life*. 4. The special duties wherein it stands; *holinesse and righteousness*. 5. The trial of the truth of these duties; *before him*. Of these in their course.

First touching the party from whom the power to *serue God* must be expected: *That he would grant vnto vs* (saith *Zacharie*.) This is a chiefe difference betwixt the Law and the Gospel. The Law commandeth good things, but sheweth no meanes of doing them. The Gospell doth not onely enioyne things right, but declareth also, how and whence that may bee supplied which is wanting in vs. Therefore *Zacharie* doeth not onely manifest the drift and intent of God in redeeming vs, (namely, that wee should *serue him*) but doeth also point his finger to the fountaine, and teacheth vs who it is, that will enable vs to doe it. And indeed this is a part of the Couenant of grace, *That as God will expect seruice at our hands, so he will make vs able to per-*

The 2. Do-
ctrine.

forme that acceptable service which hee requireth. In the handling of which doctrine, I will declare two things. 1. That in vs there is no such power. 2. That God worketh it in those whom he hath chosen. The former of these is apparent out of the manifest testimonies of the Scripture.

All the imaginations of the thoughts of mans hart are only evil continually^a. We are not sufficient of our selues to thinke any thing as of our selues^y. Without me you can do nothing, saith Christ^z. Now, who can bring a cleane thing out of filthinesse^a, or whether can men gather grapes of Thornes^b?

There is nothing but crookednesse in our nature, and how is it possible that any good thing should come there from? The second branch, touching the supplie from God of that which is wanting in vs, is very cleere. *What man is he that feareth the Lord, him will hee teach the way that hee shall chuse^c; Thou shalt walke safely by the way, and thy feet shall not stumble^d; I will cause you to walke in my statutes^e.* These

places shew how that the Lord will furnish his redeemed with such a measure of grace, as that they shall walke in such a way, and runne such a course as shall bee pleasing and acceptable to himselfe. The order and maner of the Lords bringing this to passe in them is this: First, because the heart is the fountaine of all our actions, therefore Gods first worke in them, is, to put a new spirit into their bowels, and, to take the stonie hart out of their bodies, and to giue them

a heart of flesh^f, that is, to remooue their naturall vntowardnesse, and to make their hearts, more inclinable and pliable vnto good. Secondly, he putteth his Law in their inward parts, and writeth it there^g, he planteth in them the true sauing knowledge, he openeth their harts^h, making them to conceaue and vnderstand it, hee causeth them to loue it, and to delight in it, he kindleth in them a desire to practise it, and to walke in all holy obedience to it. Thirdly,

hee furnisheth them with the assistance of a secret director, a word behinde them, saying to them: This is the way, walke in itⁱ; and thus he keepeth their feet^k, and guides them

^a Gen. 6. 5.

^y 2. Cor. 3. 5.

^z Ioh. 15. 5.

^a Iob 14. 4.

^b Math. 7. 16.

^c Psal. 25. 12.

^d Pro. 3. 23.

^e Ezech. 36. 27.

^f Ezech. 11. 19.

^g Ier. 31. 33.

^h Act. 16. 14.

ⁱ Isay 30. 21.

^k 1. Sam. 2. 9.

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63

*in the way*¹. Fourthly, hee *fillet* them with the fruits of righteousness^m, that is, hee enableth them to bring forth that good into outward act, the knowledge whereof is seated in their hearts; that so they may not bee idle nor unfruitfullⁿ, but may *adorne the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things*^o. Lastly, hee doth not so leaue them, but the hand of his mercy is still stretched out, to *stablish them in euery word and good worke*^p, to confirmethem and to *make them perfit*^q, that so they may hold out, and may not be *wearie of well doing*^r, but that the yoke of Christ may become easie^s vnto them, and the Christian life may not seeme (as it doeth to the wicked) burdensome and vnsauorie. Thus it is manifest, that serue the Lord of our selues we cannot; and withall, that God hath euen tied himselfe by promise to enable his seruants thereunto.

We are taught by this, when we are called vpon to any good worke, not to runne to our selues, as though by our owne power we should be able to performe it, (for who are we that any good thing should come from vs?) but we must lift vp our hearts to God, praying with Dauid: *Open my eyes*^t; *Teach mee the way of thy statutes*^u; *Incline my heart vnto thy testimonies*^x; *Direct my steps in thy word*^y. We are by nature *dead in trespasses and sinnes*^z: vntill he quicken vs by his euerliuing spirit, and create a new heart^a within vs, we cannot entertaine so much as a motion vnto good. And this is the true cause, that we are so barren in good duties, and so fruitfull in the *unfruitfull workes of darkenesse*^b euen because we aske not^c. Thou which art an adulterer, or a man giuen to drunkenness, or apt to contend, or to be desirous of reuenge, or to be drawen by euery occasion into euill companie, or which canst scarcely remember any good thing taught, or which findest a kind of drowsinesse still to creepe vpon thee, when thou comest to heare the word of God: when wast thou an earnest and humble suter vnto God, out of a hartie detestation of these euils, that he would enable thee to reforme them? when didst thou intreat him

¹ Pia. 25. 9.^m Phil. 1. 11.

4

ⁿ 2. Pet. 1. 8.^o Tit. 2. 10.

5

^p 2. Thes. 2.

17.

^q Heb. 13. 21.^r 2. Thes. 3.

13.

^s Math. 11. 30.

The Use.

^t Psal. 119. 18.^u Vers. 33.^x Vers. 36.^y Vers. 133.^z Ephe. 2. 1.^a Psal. 51. 10.^b Eph. 5. 11.^c Iam. 4. 2.

and begge with him to subdue thy unruly and untamed affections: when didst thou lament before him, with a sorrowfull heart, the untowardnesse of thy nature vnto good: what maruell then, if sinne get the dominion ouer thee, if thou be led captiue by thine owne lusts, if euill grow strong vpon thee: For why? Although happily thou couldest wish, that God would pardon thee, yet thou art not a suter to him to reforme thee; thou couldest be content that thy sinnes might be remitted, but thou dost not intreat that they may be subdued. When thou feelest an euill lie hard vpon thee, and perceiuest that it still strueth to draw thee to the practise of it, thou shouldest doe as *Paul*, beseech the Lord that it may depart from thee^a. God hath so bound himselfe, to fulfill the desire of them that feare him^c, that at least (which yet is not little) thou shalt receiue the comfort which *Paul* did, my grace shall be sufficient for thee^d. God hath made a couenant to grant grace, and albeit for triall of faith he may delay suters for it, in some particulars, for a time, yet he will not finally denie it. If any lacke wisdom, let him aske of God, & it shall be giuen him^e. Who can say that this promise was euer broken? Remember this then; when mention is made of the end of redemption, namely, a life led to Gods glorie, thinke who it is from whom this grace must come: It is God which giueth it: let vs strue to him by our prayers^h, certainly we shall not be disappointed of our hope.

^a 2. Cor. 12. 8.^c Psal. 145. 19.^d 2. Cor. 12. 9.^e Iam. 1. 5.^h Rom. 15. 30.ⁱ Psal. 2. 11.^k Rom. 8. 15.

The next point is the maner of doing this duty: (without feare.) This place must first be examined, because it may seeme contrary to another place, which biddeth vs to serue the Lord with feareⁱ. We must therfore learne to distinguish: There is a hellish feare, and there is a holy feare, a slauish feare, and a sonlike feare. The former of these is called by *S. Paul*, the spirit of bondage^k. It is such as slaues haue in respect of those to whom they are in bondage: A kind of respect they haue to those in whose power they are, they doe that which is commanded them, but they

neither

The Sixth Sermon.

neither haue loue to their commanders, nor take any delight in that which is enioyned them : that which they doe, they doe by enforcement, and in feare of the whip. Such is the feare of God in reprobates : sometimes they are stricken with a kind of awe of Gods maiestie, and doe euen tremble at his iudgements, and (it may be) doe something which is required, but their obedience proceedeth not out of any loue to God, or out of any truth of affection to that which is performed, but only out of constraint. Thus did Cain *cast downe his countenance*¹, Esau *weepe*^m, Pharaoh *let the people goe*ⁿ, Ahab *humble himselfe*^o, Iudas *repent*^p. None of these was truly grieved for his offence, or sorry that God was displeased : They had an apprehension of *the terror of the Lord*^q, and that wrung from them something, in which otherwise of themselves they tooke no delight. Now the other feare is called the *spirit of adoption*^r, and it is a feare to offend, rising out of the apprehension and feeling of Gods loue : as, when the experience which I haue had in my selfe of Gods gracious dealing with mee, maketh mee to entertaine a feare lest I should abuse his loue, and doe ought that might displease his maiestie. This kind of feare may be where there is the greatest and firmest and most respectiue loue : as betwixt the father and sonne ; the husband and wife : *Let the wife see that she feare her husband*, saith Paul^r. This distinction of feare, being rightly vnderstood, it will be easie to reconcile these places. *Serue the Lord with feare* saith Dauid : that is, consider you the maiestie of God, what he is in himselfe, and what he is to you, and so let your hearts stand in awe of him, and be you afraid to displease him. Againe, the end of our redemption is, that we should *serue God without feare*, saith Zachary : This is his meaning ; Whereas the face of God, is naturally a terror vnto vs, euen as the face of a Iudge is to a theefe, and whereas that which we doe is so full of maimes and blemishes, that we can haue no courage to present it vnto God, nor hope that he will accept it, this is the end of our

¹ Gen. 4. 6.^m Gen. 27. 38.ⁿ Exo. 12. 31.^o 1. King. 21.

27.

^p Math. 27. 3.^q 2. Cor. 5. 11.^r Rom. 8. 15.^r Ephe. 5. 33.

The 3. Do-
ctrine.

Heb. 12. 29.

Psal. 130. 4.

2. Cor. 7. 1.

redemption, that being certainly perswaded of the fauour of God in Christ, and of remission of sinnes by him, all this feare may be quite remoued, and we may boldly come to the throne of grace, and comfortably assure our selues, that God for Christ will accept, euen the imperfect and scant measure of our obedience. This is the true sense of the place, this is the feare, in the freedome from which standeth the true seruice of God. So that now this is the doctrine; *That till the mind and conscience of a Christian be quieted and pacified by the knowledge of ones personall acquittance before God by Christ, a man cannot truly serue God, nor yeeld vnto him that obedience which he ought.* This is plaine out of the place: the true manner of seruing God is *without feare*, that is, without astonishment and suspense of mind how God will accept that which we doe. Now this feare cannot be banished, but by the comfortable apprehension of a discharge by Christ, therefore without this comfortable apprehension, no man can serue and obey God as he ought to doe. These things are all manifest. The reason also of the doctrine is apparent thus: As often as I recount with my selfe the seuerity and iustice of God, how that he cannot abide iniquity, and is in his wrath a *consuming fire*, and doe consider withall, how full of corruption my heart is, and how farre short the best I can doe, comes of that which is required, what heart shall I haue to tender my seruice vnto him, vnlesse I be someway assured that my person is accepted in Christ, and that Gods iust displeasure is allaied towards mee for his sake, so that my scant performances shall be shrouded vnder his most absolute and perfect obedience? Hence is that saying of Dauid: *There is mercy with thee, that thou maist be feared*. It is the hope and apprehension of mercy which encourageth to obedience. *Seeing we haue these promises* (saith the Apostle) *let vs cleanse our selues from all filthinesse, &c*. See what Paul inferreth vpon the promises of mercy which God hath made. Paul saith in one place, that *Whatsoener is not of*

Faith

The Sixth Sermon.

67

Faith is sinne^y, meaning that whatsoever is offered to God, which proceedeth not from faith, the same is a sinne. In another place he saith, that *by faith* our consciences haue *peace with God*^z. Both the places put together do shew thus much, that vntill the conscience bee pacified by the assurance of reconciliation with God by Christ, nothing that is done can finde acceptance with the Lord. The order of the words touching *Habel*, is woorth the noting; *The Lord had respect to Habel, and to his offering*^a: First, to *Habel*, then to his offering. So that till I know that God doth accept my person, I can haue no hope that he will respect my seruice.

Rom. 14. 23.

Rom. 5. 1.

Gen. 4. 4.

The 1. Use.

By this it is plaine, first, that it is vnpossible for a Papist rightly to serue God, or to yeeld vnto him any true obedience. This wil be thought a hard censure, especially touching those which seeme so deuout and make so great a profession of good works: But it is easily iustified by the doctrine of this place. God is not rightly serued vnlesse it be without feare, without that slauish awe, which ariseth out of the not knowing a mans own particular reconciliation with God. Now it is certaine, that Papists do stifly maintaine it, that it is vnpossible for a man by an ordinary faith to bee assured of Gods fauour. By the Decrees of the Councell of Trent, a man must doubt of his saluation as long as he liueth in this world^b: so that indeed a Papist can neuer attaine to any true peace of conscience by his owne doctrine: If he keepe himselfe to it, he must resolve while he liueth to be in suspense and vncertaine of Gods fauour: What a racke is this to a mans conscience, to bee taught that he can neuer bee sure in this World that his sins are pardoned, and that God is reconciled to him in Christ Iesus? What cheerefulnesse or boldnesse can a man haue to serue God, when it is taught that there is no possibilitie for him to be assured in his soule that God in Christ will accept his seruice and forgiue his weaknesses? Let this be a rule to vs to iudge of Poperie: it is a desperate comfort-

^b Sess. 6. Cap.
9. & Can.
13. 16.

lesse doctrine. Christ came into the world to free vs from this seruile feare, and to fill our hearts with cheerefulnesse, by shewing vnto vs Gods louing countenance: Poperie holdeth vs in suspence, and laboureth to vphold that feare which is the very direct enemy to true obedience.

The 2. Use.

Secondly, this maketh also against the common opinion, which (in this point) is the same with the Papists. The most doe talke (I know not what) of seruing God, and professe to do it euerie day: but if it be asked what ground they haue of peace with God by Christ, this will be found to bee a verie strange demand, and they will not know what to answer: Securitie they haue enough, but, what true peace of conscience is, they vnderstand not. Well may they seeme to be without feare in regard of their common brutishnesse: but let their consciences be touched and awaked, by some crosse, or iudgement, or by deaths approaching, then this seruile feare, this dismall horror of heart will soone appeare, and it will bee a hard matter to comfort them. Know wee therefore, that vntill we labour to know our owne particular reconciliation with God by Christ, and to that end reuerence the ordinance of God (the Word and Sacraments, which serue to no other vse but to applie Christ to our soules) carelesse we may be, frozen in our dregges wee may bee, benumbed and senslesse wee may be; but true peace of conscience wee can neuer haue, neither can any seruice come from vs which shall be pleasing and acceptable vnto God: vnlesse my heart can witnesse with me, that I serue and obey God cheerefully, and with a free spirit, knowing that God for Christ hath and doth accept me, and that my weake seruices shall bee fauourably looked vpon, God measuring them rather by the sinceritie of my affection, than by the measure of my performance, I can not say that I serue God; that which I do, commeth from the spirit of bondage, and God esteemes it not.



THE SEVENTH SERMON.

VERS. 75. *All the daies of our life, in holinesse and righte-
ousnesse before God.*

THe next point to be handled, is, the Time, to which our seruing of God without feare is limited: *All the daies of our life.* Heere I will handle two points. 1. That this life is the time of our seruing God. 2. That it must not bee done in some part, but in all the daies of our life.

Touching the first, this is the doctrine; *That the time of our liuing here in the world, is the alone time, in which those duties are to be done which ought to be performed by vs in token of thankfulnessse to God for our redemption, and in respect of the hope which we haue of life eternall.* This plainly followeth hence: for, if the question be, when and at what time the duty of seruing God (which is the end of our redemption) must be done; the answer is, it must be done in the *daies of our life*, while we liue heere, or not at all. This is agreeing to the Scriptures in other places. *While we haue time let vs doe good &c.* that is, while we liue here, for when that time is gone, we haue no further opportunity. *In this present world,* saith the same Apostle elsewhere^a; *The time of our dwelling heere,* saith Peter^c; *During my life,* saith Dauid^d. *I haue finished my course,* said Paul, when he was neere his death^e: He could not haue so spoken truly, if, after his departure hence, there had bene any thing further to be

The 1. Do-
ctrine.

^a Gal. 6. 10.

^d Tit. 2. 12.

^c 1. Pet. 1. 17.

^e Psal. 116. 2.

^f 2. Tim. 4. 7.

K

performed.

^b Heb. 9. 27.ⁱ 2. Cor. 6. 2.

The 1. Use.

^k Bellar. lib. 1.
de purg. ca. 11.^l Act. 19. 25.^m Rev. 14. 13.ⁿ Luc. 16. 22.

23.

^o Anno Dom.
1439.

performed. Thus all is confined to the compasse of this present life. *After death commeth the iudgement^b*: then is a time of reckning, not of practise. Besides, death being come, the time of grace is expired, the ministry of reconciliation ceaseth; therefore *now is the accepted time, behold now the day of saluation*, saith the Apostle^l.

This serveth first, to batter downe the wals of the Popes supposed purgatorie: the ground whereof is this, that there is a place for repentance after this life, and that as some, which are perfit Christians, goe directly after death to heauen, and others, which are extreameley wicked, go straight to hell; so there are a middle kind, who hauing not perfected their obedience in this world, nor made full satisfaction for all their sinnes, must stay by the way, in a place of torment, where the reliques of sin must be purged out, and the full summe of their duty made vp before they can be admitted into heauen. This is held as an article of faith, and they are said to be certainly damned so many as doe not belecue it^k. Indeed Papists haue reason to maintaine it, it is a fire which hath well heated the Popes kitching, and the conceit and feare of it, together with an opinion that the offerings of Priests can helpe to shorten a mans time in it, hath brought them in no small reuenue: they may truly say, *that by this craft they haue their goods^l*. Now the opinion is plainly confuted by this place. For whatsoever is required of vs, either toward God, or toward man, is to be done in *the daies of our life*, or neuer. The dead in *the Lord, doe rest from their labours^m*: This could not be true, if they were either busied in doing good workes for the getting to heauen, or were tormented in fire. They sweat much to make good this fancie; but in vaine: sure we are, the Scripture maketh mention of two only places, for the deadⁿ: neither was there in Moses law appointed any sacrifice on the behalfe of the dead. The thing it selfe came first from the heathen, & was vnknownen to the world vntill the Councell of Florence^o: and therefore though they threaten

The Seuenth Sermon.

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threaten the blacke curse to those that denie it, yet let vs not feare it; *the curse that is causlesse shall not come* ^v.

P Pro. 26. 2.

The 2. Vse.

Secōdly, this maketh against those who are of that swinish disposition, that they neuer thinke vpon doing good vntill they die; while they liue, they rake, and catch, and extort, and oppresse: A man may as soone wring water out of a flint, as draw ought from them to a good purpose; then they grumble like *Nabal*, *shall I take my bread &c. and giue it to men, whom I knowe not whence they bee* ⁹? But when they come to the knife, and die they must and leaue their goods behind them, then (it may be) shall some drop or two be giuento the poore, or to some good seruice. I doe not condemne it if any man by will bequeath ought to the Church or poore: this I condemne, when such things are neuer done tell then: It is an argument, that that which is then done, is but a formall and extorted beneuolence. Formall; men therein will doe as others doe: Extorted; because it is done most commonly to stop the mouth of an accusing conscience. Remember we therefore, that the obedience which we owe to God, or to man for Gods sake, reacheth it selfe to the whole life, and is not to be restrained to the last act. That knowledge which wee will learne, and that good which we will doe, let vs applie it now: It is a miserable thing when men must be catechized in principles, and must first begin to exercise charity, when they are going to appeare before God to giue account of their life.

9 1. Sam. 25.

11.

Thirdly, this doth presse a kind of hastning in the duties of godlinesse without delaying or putting off. For marke how the spirit of God speaketh. He saith, that the life present is our only time of well doing: but how doth he define life? not by moneths or yeeres, but by daies, which is also the vsuall maner of the Scripture ^r. This speech argueth the shortnesse of our life, being nothing but a composition of a few daies; which how soone they may be swallowed vp, by that long night of death, we cannot tell. This should

The 3. Vse.^r Gen. 47. 9.

Psal. 90. 9.

12.

ubi - non bene

Psal. 119. 60.

Ioh. 9. 4.

Psal. 90. 12.

*the number in y^e daies
your. Teach a child
mouth. & when he
be shall not forget it.*

Gen. 27. 2. 3.

*I must Press
re of die. I will*

Isay 22. 13.

Reu. 12. 12.

Psal. 145. 2.

*The 2. Do-
ctrine.*

make vs to make haste with David^e, and to worke while it is day^e. It was the very thing intended by Moses in that sute of his, *Teach vs to number our daies &c^e*, that is, enable vs (O Lord) so to summe vp the time of our life, that considering the shortnesse of it, we may learne this wisdom to doe that first which most concerns vs, so that if by the sudden comming of death, any thing for lacke of time be left vnperformed, it may not be that, the not doing whereof will be the vndoing of our soules. Memorable is the speech of Isaak: *Behold I am now old, and know not the day of my death, wherfore now &c^e*: as if he had said; There is a thing to be done, which must be done before I die, and I know, that as the daies of my life are but few, so the greatest part of them are gone and past, therefore that which I intended I will hasten to doe it: so should euery Christian reason with himselfe; My time is short, my life a span, my daies not many, therefore Lord frame my heart, that whilest it is called to day I may turne to thee, and seeke thy fauour. This care is a chiefe difference betwixt the godly and the wicked: For they argue cleane contrarie, *Let vs eat and drinke, to morrow we shall die^e*: Therein they imitate their father the Diuell; for euen of the same humor is he: *He hath great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time^e*.

The second point now followeth. For so Zachary teacheth vs, that as God is to be serued in our life (which is the more generall point), so it must be all the daies of our life. Here come to be opened two doctrines: 1 That religion is to be practised euery day. 2 That it is to be practised to the end of our daies. The former of these requireth assiduity, and daimeesse; The latter perpetuity and lastingnesse. *I will blisse thee daily* (saith David) *and praise thy name for euer^e*: That speech may be in stead of a commentarie to this place. I will speake of both severally. The former of the two doctrines is; *That a Christian man is bound by the word of God to a daily practise of religion.* Every day and

Yea every day. Spallly Sabbath day. euery

The Seuenth Sermon.

73

euery action of the day must be a witnesse of his care to approue himselfe in all holy conuersation vnto God. It will not be hard to proue this by the Scripture; namely that a godly life is to be brought into euery daies practise. *We must henceforth liue as much time as remaineth in the flesh, not after the lusts of men^b. As much time: so that no time is exempted from liuing after the will of God. Let thy heart be in the feare of the Lord continually^c: There is no allowance for any intermission of time, to be spent as it were a little more vainely or carelessly than other. Paul speakes of being giuen vnto euery good worke continually, or of attending thereupon daily^d. Euery good worke: there is no toleration for any sinne: Euery day: there is no exemption of time. I endenour my selfe to haue alway a cleere conscience^e. Alway, or, thorowout, that is, at one time as well as at another, one time of the day as well as another. There are very few duties of religion, but the Scripture speaketh of the dailynesse of them either by precept or example: For daily praying, besides the commandement pray continually, we haue Daniels example, of three times a day^f; and Dauids, of seven times a day^g. For reading we haue the charge giuen to Iosua: Let not this booke of the law depart from thee^h. For meditation, we heare Dauid: Oh how I loue thy law! it is my meditation continuallyⁱ. For talking of good things: My tongue shall talke of thy righteousness daily^j. For watching ouer our owne selues: Keepe thy heart with all diligence, saith Salamon^k. Watch in all things, saith Paul^l: Take heed lest at any time there be in any of you an exill heart^m. For depending vpon Gods prouidence, we are taught to aske daily breadⁿ. For preparation for the crosse, there is speech of taking it vp daily^o. For seeking to doe good to others, there is a precept to exhort one another daily^p. These places and many like, shew, that one day as well as another, is to be consecrated to God, and the duties of religion tending to Gods glory, the edification of our owne soules, and the good of others, are to be performed euery day.*

21111

K 3

And

*Justified by
Pray continually
watching over you
daily
I. Pet. 4.2.
Let us be your
miserable*

Pro. 23.17.

Toto die.

Tremel.

So do good works

daily
have a good conscience

So doth the

word signi-

fic. 1. Tim.

5.10.

Act. 24.16.

Diamus to 6.

1. Thes. 5.17.

Dan. 9.10.

Psa. 119.164.

Ios. 1.8.

Psa. 119.97.

Psal 71.24.

Pro. 4.23.

2. Tim. 4.5.

Hcb 3.12.

Matth. 6.11.

Luc 9.23.

Hcb. 3.13.

*Even if you are never won to be for manna - to keep you from
what you do, what you do, what you do*

And if it were not so, why should God be so carefull in the Scripture to giue such directions for euery specialty that can be incident to any day ; as, apparrell, meat, calling, companie, speech, solitarinesse, recreation, health, sicknes, prosperity, crosses, friends &c? whatsoeuer occasion may at any time take vp a man in any part of the day, the Scripture giueth a direction for it, because a man is bound to make conscience of the practise of religion in euery particular. Now a double reason there is for this doctrine. First, Gods *compassions are renewed every morning^f*, and he *ladeth vs daily with benefits^g*. Now sith there is no slackening of Gods kindnesse, why should there be any intermission of our dutie? Secondly, Satan *goeth about, seeking to deuoure^h*: when a man beginneth to be a little secure, and to giue the raines a little to his owne heart to wander after it owne waies, then taketh he his aduantage ; and the soule being by some intermission of a godly care thus (as it were) let loose, doth quickly fall into his snares.

^f Lam. 3. 23.
^g Psal. 68. 19.

^h 1. Pet. 5. 8.

The 1. Vse.

The first vse of this doctrine is, to remoue two opinions, which are common in the world touching religion: The one is, that it is an easie matter to be a Christian, a thing of no great paines to be religious ; some generall desires, some superficiall good meanings, some formall shews, some deuotion now and then by fits, some few actions of charity ; this is enough to saluation. Hence commeth our common security : Moiling and droiling there is for the world without measure : To some carnall and carking humors, the day is not long enough, the weeke is too short, euen some of Gods day must be borrowed for earthly occasions. Godlinesse is followed but at leasure times : heauen we suppose will come of it selfe without seeking. How many daies passe ouer vs in a yere, in which matters of the soule are not once thought vpon ! But how much are wee heerein deceiued? Religion is a taske for euery day : Hee that doeth not make conscience euery day to looke to his Religion, to profit in his Religion, and to shew foorth the

fruits

fruits of his Religion, that hee may comfortably at night say, he is so much neerer his iourneies end to heauen, than hee was at his first setting out in the morning; that mans Religion is not as it ought: and he which thinketh to come to heauen by this idle and negligent course, shall be called *the least in the kingdome of God*^x. The second opinion is, that if there bee some shew of deuotion and care to serue God on the Sabbath day, then vpon other daies men may be left free to themselves, and may take a little more libertie to be secure. If matters of godlinesse be banished from their thoughts, and tongues, and liues, all the whole weeke long, they thinke it to be no great offence: This opinion is ouerthrowen by this place. Wee were redeemed to serue God euery day: Though the Sabbath bee to be imploied more especially (God then vouchsafing more plentifull helpes to godlinesse) yet all euill is to bee auoided euerie day, and all such good is to be done, as in our callings and liues we shall be occasioned: Endeavour wee must to walke in the sanctification of our hearts, and innocency of life in other daies, as well as on the Sabbath day.

^x Matt. 5. 19.

Secondly, this must be a motiue to vs, euery day, euen at our first awaking, to deuote and consecrate our selues to the Lord, and to arme our selues with a holy resolution to strue against sinne: This will be a matter of no little benefit: For by this meanes God will enable vs to be *blamelesse and pure, & without rebuke*^y, and we shall be *kept from presumptuous sinnes*^z. The want heereof draweth manie of Gods children sometimes into great inconueniences, namely, when as, not considering the slippery path which they walke in heere in the world, and being without feare of their owne frailtie, they doe not covenant with themselves to bee very watchfull, and to commit their way vnto the Lord, and to stand vpon their guard against euerie sinne: We haue an example of this in *Peter*: Doubtlesse hee had no settled purpose to denie his Master: yet to what a case did his owne rashnesse bring him, while he did not serious-

The 2. Vse.

^y Phil. 2. 15.

^z Psal. 19. 13.

ly cast with himselfe what danger might arise, by the place and persons, neither yet waighed his own weaknesse, how easily he might be snared, hauing no warrant to bee there. This draweth many into ill company, to swearing, drinking, gaming, &c. I will not say, that these euils in some do alwaies proceed from a purpose so to do; but rather from the want of a purpose to withstand them, and to giue vp themselves vnto God. I would this were written in euerie ones heart, that euery day must be consecrate to God, euerie day must be a holy day to a Christian, though not according to our sense in respect of cessation from labour, yet in respect of watching and struing against sinne.

The 3. Vse.

Thirdly, if euery day must be giuen to God, what shall we say of those which spend so many whole daies in the seruice of Sathan? whole daies (I say) or the better part of the day, in drinking and reuelling, in sports, in pranking vp themselves, in plotting to defraud, reuenge, and eat out others: How doe these consecrate their daies to God? What religion or godlinesse is in these fashions? When men make euery day either for vaine pleasure, or sensuality, or Epicurisme, or worldly benefit, what is become of Gods part? Thinke vpon it: I doubt not, but the serious thinking vpon this, that God challengeth euery day, will reforme many corruptions. Thus much touching the daelinesse of seruing God. Now followeth the perpetuitie.

The 3. Doctrin.

The doctrine then is this; *That as we must make conscience of diligence in good duties for the present time, so we must haue a care of continuance and perseuerance also. All the daies of our life, saith Zachary; therefore the last day as well as the first. The Scripture is full in this point. Christ expounds the seede which fell into good ground, of those which bring forth fruit with patience^a. That only is good fruit which is accompanied with continuance. Often times we shall find the condition of perseuerance put in. He that endureth to the end, he shall be saved^b. In due season we shall reap, if we faint not^c. Be thou faithfull vnto the death, and I will giue*

^a Luc. 8. 15.

^b Matt. 24. 13.

^c Gal. 6. 9.

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thee the crowne of life^a. The laborers in the vineyard, none of them had wages, vnlesse he wrought vntill *the euen*^c. We must not only obey the call of Christ, *Come to me*^f, but the charge also which he giueth, *Abide in mee*^g. If ye continue in my word, then are ye verily my disciples^h.

The vse is, to mind vs of the Apostles counsell, which is, not to be wearie in well doingⁱ. Our nature is apt to recoill and to fall backe, like a broken bow^k. A kind of facietie will quickly creep vpon vs, and those good duties, which at the first seeme pleasing, will (without great care) be a wearines^l vnto vs, according as we see in many. I haue known some, to whom the preaching of the word was more welcome than now it is; who were more carefull to vse priuate meanes to profit by it than now they are; who had a little restrained some corruptions, to which now they are caried with full streame. They looke backe vpon *Sodom*, and they could almost be content to be in *Egypt* againe. Looke to it, thou which art guilty to thy selfe of thine owne backesliding: remember thou owest vnto God *All thy daies: The trees planted in the Lords house bring forth fruit in their age*^m; and they which doe not so, *shall be hewen downe and cast into the fire*ⁿ. It must not be in religion as in bankets, *In the beginning good wine, and then after that which is worse*^o; but rather, like those of *Thyatira*, *our Workes must be more at last, than at the first*^p.

The fourth generall point in this passage of speech, is, what be the special duties in which this our seruing of God stands: *In holinesse and righteousness*. These two words answer to the two tables of the morall law. By *holinesse* are vnderstood those duties which are owing immediately from vs vnto God; and are set downe in the foure first commandements: namely; a *holy* regard to the truth and maiestie of his Godhead, in the first commandement: a *holy* manner of worshipping him according to his will, in the second: a *holy* vsage of his name, in the third: a *holy* keeping of his *sabbath*, in the fourth. By *righteousnes* are meant those

^a Reu. 2. 10.^c Matt. 20. 8.^f Matt. 11. 28.^g Ioh. 15. 4.^h Ioh. 8. 31.

The Use.

ⁱ 2. Thes. 3. 13.^k Psal. 78. 57.^l Mal. 1. 13.^m Ps. 92. 13. 14.ⁿ Matt. 3. 10.^o Ioh. 2. 10.^p Reu. 2. 19.

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duties

duties which we owe to our neighbor : of all which the summe is, to giue to euery one his due : to wrong no man in his honor, or in that precedence which God hath giuen him, in the first precept : nor in his life, in the sixth : nor in his chastity, in the seventh : nor in his goods, in the eighth : nor in his good name, in the ninth : nor to entertaine a thought which may draw to any of these breaches, in the tenth : so that now our obedience and seruice of God stands not in following our owne courses, but in making conscience to frame our selues to that which the Lord commends vnto vs, to be performed either to himselfe, or to others. Heere is a large field to enter into, but I will abridge that plentiful matter, which offereth it selfe vnto mee, as much as I can. Two speciall points are heere taught vs.

The 4. Doctrine.

^a Deut. 4. 1.

^r Cap. 5. 1.

^r Cap. 8. 1.

^r Ioh. 13. 17.

^a M tt. 7. 26.

^a Iam. 1. 22.

The first is; *That true religion stands not in a verball profession or in formall shewes, but in action, & in the doing of that which God requireth.* It is plaine heere : For heere particular duties are designed, in the practise whereof true religion and godlinesse doth consist. In the Scripture, doing and practise are still vrged. *Hearken to the lawes which I teach you to doe^a : Heare the lawes &c. that ye may take heed to obserue them.^r Ye shall keepe all the commandments &c. for to doe them^r. If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye doe them^r. Whosoever heareth these my words and doth them not, shall be likened vnto a foolish man^a. Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only^a.* If it were not so, it were nothing to be religious, it were no great thing to be godly : To professe is nothing, to talke and speake of religion, and to make a shew is a matter soone done, the veriest Atheist may goe so farre : doing is the triall, the fruits of holinesse and righteousness doe shew a man to be a Christian.

The Vse.

This maketh against those, who haue only tipped their tongues with religion, and haue taken vpon them a name, and put on a vizard of godlinesse. Like they be to the figge tree which our Sauour cursed, abounding with leaues, but

without

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without fruit^a : the Apostle thus describeth them ; they *haue a shew of godlinesse , but denie the power thereof^a : such hearers had Ezekiel ; They did come vnto him , and sit before him and heare his words , but they would not doe them^a : and such haue we : right like him in the Gospell : he came to Christ with a question , Good master what ought I to doe , to inherit eternall life ? The same seemeth to be our desire in comming to the Congregation : well , when he heard his taske ; he was very heauie^b , and went his way doing nothing : euen so , perswade vs to any thing which is crossing to our humors , and commeth athwart our courses , we say straight , *This is a hard saying , who can heare it^c ?* Remember we this then , that to be a true Christian , is no titular thing , it is a matter of action . Many at the last day shall say , *We haue prophesied^d , & we haue professed thy name , O Lord : but seeing they haue bene welles without water , the blacke darkenesse shall be to them for ever^e .* The other doctrine collected hence , is ; *That in the practise of religion , there must be a ioyning together of these two , holinesse and righteousness ; our holy cariage towards God , and our upright demeanor towards men .* It is not said heere , *holinesse or righteousness* , as though either might serue , but *holinesse and righteousness* , both together . God hath ioyned them , and man may not seuer them . To this agreeth that of Paul ; *That we should liue soberly and righteously and godly &c .^f* These are two maine parts of the image of God : *Righteousnesse and true holinesse^g ;* neither can we assure our selues that we are truely regenerate , vnlesse we find in our selues a concurrence of both . It is absurd to be respectiue towards men , and to neglect that duty which we owe to God : It is hypocriticall to make shew of deuotion to God , and to haue no regard how we liue in respect of men : But , to be carefull in the knowledge and seruice of God , and fruitfull in the duties of equity and euennesse amongst men , this is religion , this is the whole duty of man .*

This doctrine is very necessarie , because , the renting

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asunder

^a Matt. 21. 19.^a 2. Tim. 3. 5.^a Eze. 33. 31.^b Luc. 18. 18.
&c.^c Ioh. 6. 60.^d Matt. 7. 22.^e 2. Pet. 2. 17.
The 5. Do-
ctrine.^f Tit. 2. 12.^g Eph. 4. 24.

The Vse.

afunder of theſe two, *holineſſe and righteousneſſe*, is the common euill of thoſe which make a profeſſion of religion. Some there are, who in the outward exerciſes of religion are very diligent, in repairing to the congregation, in hearing, in communicating, in refraining from open miſorders on the ſabbath day: but looke on them in thoſe things which concerne men, there you ſhall find them exceeding faulty; proud, diſdainfull, malicious, reuengeful, cruell, oppreſſing, all for themſelues, without reſpect to others: Others there are which ſhew a kind of ciuility in outward faſhion to the world; quiet they be and peaceable, obſeruing a kind of truth and equity in their dealings, and ſo gaine a name and an opinion of honeſt men; yet haue no regard to the exerciſes of piety, more than for outward forme, deſpiſe knowledge, baſely eſteeme the publike miniſtry, make no reckoning of the ſabbath. Both theſe ſorts come ſhort, and continuing as they are can neuer be ſaued. Remember then, to ioyne both together, *holineſſe* towards God, *righteousneſſe* towards men: Art thou a loue to heare, a man forward in the publike exerciſes of religion? thou doſt well: ſee thou make conſcience alſo of equity amongſt men, els all thy devotion is but hypocriſie. Art thou a man of ciuill faſhion, that pretendſt to giue euery man his owne? ſee thou ſeaſon thy cariage to men, with knowledge and zeale in the matters of God, els thy ciuilitie is but formalitie: and both the former with his *vnrighteous holineſſe*, and thou, with thine *vnholly righteousneſſe*, ſhall be cut off from hauing any inheritance in the kingdome of Chriſt and of God.

The fiſt and laſt point, according to the order firſt propounded, is the triall of the truth of all theſe duties, in thoſe words, *before him*: whereby is meant ſuch *holineſſe* and ſuch *righteousneſſe*, which is framed, not barely to content men, but to pleaſe God: where we are taught; *That if we would be religious indeed, we muſt not looke ſo much how to make a ſhew and to be ſomething in appearance and opinion*

before

*The 6. Do-
ctrine.*

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before men, as how to approve our selves by truth and sincerity of heart vnto God. Truth it is, that the opinion of men is not simplie to be neglected: for it is the rule of the Apostle that we should procure things honest in the sight of all men^b: but yet the approbation of men must not be made the rule of godlinesse, but only the will and maiestie of God. It was the commendation of *Enoch* and of *Noah*, that the times wherein they liued being ouerrunne with leaudnesse, yet they walked with God^c, that is, they considered more what God appointed, than what most men practised, and desired more to approve themselves by a holy cariage vnto him, than to runne to the same excesse with the multitude, though (perhaps) so to haue done, might haue beene more for their outward commodity. It was the charge giuen by God to *Abraham*, *Walke before mee*^k, that is, let it still be thy care, that, seeing I am present euery where, and priuy to all thy courses, thou maist walke as in my sight and make thy waies acceptable before mee. It was the best testimonie which *Salomon* could giue of his father *David*, that he walked before God in truth, and in righteousnesse, and in vprightnesse of heart with him.^l It was *Hezekiah* his best comfort when he thought he should die; O Lord I haue walked before thee in truth^m. When *Iob* was censured for an hypocrite (according as it is still the maner of the world, to account euery man who is more carefull in religion than themselves, to be but a dissembler), well (saith he) my witnesse is in heauen, and my record is on highⁿ; you giue your verdict of mee as you please, but I am knowen vnto God, I haue walked with him, and I doe rest satisfied with his approouement, which is the thing that I haue alwaies cared for. *Paul* speaking of the execution of his ministry, saith, that he did not handle the word of God deceitfully: as if he had said, I could easily haue taken another course in preaching, by which to haue pleased the multitude and to haue gotten my selfe credit, but it was not the thing I looked after: But what then? to approve my selfe to euery mans

^b Rom. 12. 17.^c Gen. 5. 22.
6. 9.^k Gen. 17. 1.^l 1. King. 3. 6.^m Isay 38. 5.ⁿ Iob 16. 19.

* 2. Cor. 4. 2.

P Matt. 6. 4.

The Use.

1 Iob 31. 24.

1 Psa. 51. 2.

1 Pro. 30. 20.

conscience in the sight of God^o. These feuerall examples concurring with my text, doe shew that we must care more to be religious, than to be thought religious; & haue more respect to the approbation of God, who *seeth in secret*^r, than to the opinion of men, who may be deceiued with shewes.

This doctrine doth vtterly condemne the art of seeming, which euery one (almost) hath learned in these times. The hypocrite, if he haue *Lord, Lord*, in his mouth, and be busie about the outward worke, knocking and kneeling, and framing his face to a shew of deuotion; he thinketh that he is very religious, and careth not though God seeth him within, to haue neither any sound knowledge nor any true loue to religion. The couetous worldling who racks all that can be gotten, if he can set a color to the world, that no body shall see his plots and cunning shifts, respecteth no more; albeit the Lord knoweth how his heart is set vpon the world, and hath *made gold his hope*^r, and will doe any thing for gaine, he feareth it not. The vncharitable person, if he can vse a few idle protestations, that he beareth no ill will &c. perswadeth himselfe it is enough; not remembring that the Lord beholds his thoughts, & is priuy to his desires to worke mischiefe. The close slanderer, if he can vnder hand raise vp an ill report, that the party wronged may not know he did it, is safe in his owne conceit; howbeit God knoweth that his *tongue is like a sharp razor which cutteth deceitfully*^r. The euill disposed, who are in houses of disorder when others are at Church, if the doores be shut, and no noise be made, and officers know it not, they doubt not but to auoid Gods beholding well enough. The whorish woman, if she can hide her sinne in a nie sort, so that none can prooue it directly against her, standeth vpon termes of honestie, and is not afraid of Gods presence, from whom nothing can be kept secret: *shee wipeb her mouth* (saith Salomon) *& saith, I haue not committed iniquitie*^r. Thus the care of the most is to keepe credit with men; if it be well with vs before men wee care little

how

how the case standeth betwixt vs and the Lord. This will not serue the turne when all things come to receiue their due triall: then the vizard will be plucked off from euerie hypocrite; then shall many a man be approued, whose course the world now condemneth for follie; and many that now carrie a face and beare out matters with a shew, will be found dissemblers, and the lot of hypocrites will be their portion. Let this perswade vs to affect sinceritie and singlenes of hart, and alwaies to make it our care, more to regard the acceptance with God; than the account & opinion of men. It is a speciall point of godlines, & he hath well profited in religion, that hath well learned this lesson, and this one thing which I shall name vnto you is the best triall of it; when a man is the same alone and in companie; that is, when as that sinne, that euill course which a man knoweth he would not enter into, in the presence and sight and knowledge of men, the same he doth forbear when he is by himselfe, and hath many aduantages and opportunities safely and secretly to practise it. To forbear to doe euill when men are by to behold it, is nothing, the veriest hypocrite and reprobate in the world may doe it: but, closely and secretly to abstaine, & when one hath many incitements to it, yet euen for Gods sake, and for lothnesse to displease him, to forbear, that is a thing which none but a good man indeed, a child of God can come vnto. To make shewes of holinesse & deuotion in a Church, there to looke ciuillie, and in praying to vse signes of great earnestnesse and affection, is no great matter, it is not of any value to build vpon, for an hypocrite may come so farre: But in a priuate corner, in ones *Chamber* (as Christ saith ^e) apart from the world, where no man can heare or vnderstand, or take notice of it; there to *powre out ones soule before the Lord* ^e, to cast downe himselfe in humilitie, and to make many sighes and teares, to be the messengers of the hearts desire vnto God; this is an euidence of sinceritie, this is done before God, and is without hypocrisie. So then this

*for as much as he is in
secret*

^e Matt. 6. 6.

^e 1. Sam. 1. 15.

is a sure rule to trie our selues by, if that which we would be thought to be before men, we trauel with our harts, and strue to be indeed, when none can take notice of our courses, in regard of the secrecie of them, but the Lord. He that maketh conscience of it to bee as honest, and as vprightly behaued in the greatest priuacie and solitarinesse, as hee would be if all the world beheld him and could see into his verie thoughts, that man may be saide indeed to be religious.



THE EIGHT SERMON.

VERS. 76. *And thou Babe shalt be called the Prophet of the most High: for thou shalt goe before the face of the Lord to prepare his waies.*

77. *And, to giue knowledge of saluation vnto the people, &c.*

*The second
part of the
Hymne.*



His is the beginning of the second part of this Hymne: The summe of it is a description of the office of *John Baptist*; which yet is so caried, as that in this part also, the mysterie of Christ and of saluation wrought by him is laid open very exactly.

*The order
of the whole
place to the
end.*

My method shall be this, to let you see, how ech branch of these verses dependeth on other, as it were so many linkes inchained either to other. First of all, *Zacharie* directeth his speech to the Infant (present, in my opinion) and pronounceth of him that he *shall be called*

the

the Prophet of the most high: If it be asked why hee shall bee so stiled? it is answered, *Because hee shall goe before the face of the Lord to prepare his waies*. If we would know what it is, to prepare the Lords waies, he saith it is, to giue knowledge of saluation to the people. If we demand wherein this saluation stands, hee addeth, that it standes in the remission of sinnes. If we enquire further, out of what fountaine this saluation, standing in the remission of sinnes hath flowed; he telleth vs, that is come from the tender mercy of our God. If we would be informed what is the especiall fruit of this Mercy of our God, hee setteth it downe thus, that by it is come to passe, that the day-spring from an high hath visited vs. If lastly the question be, to what speciall end this Day-spring hath appeared, hee shutteth vp all with this sweet and gracious conclusion; that the end is, *To giue light to them that sit in darknesse, and in the shadow of death, and to guid our feet into the way of peace*. This is the order of this whole place. I will prosecute euery branch in the same order and maner in which it lieth.

And first of the title, to be giuen to *Iohn Baptist*, *Thou Babe shalt be called the Prophet of the most high*. The meaning of which speech is, that all men should take notice of *Iohn*, and acknowledge him to be a Prophet of God, called from aboue, and appointed by speciall deputation for the seruice of the Church. The verification of which foretelling weread in the storie. *The multitude counted Iohn as a Prophet*^x. *All hold Iohn as a Prophet*^y. But heere may arise a doubt: *Iohn* himselfe being demanded whether he were the Prophet, answered no^z. The answer is easie, thus. It was the error of the *Iewes*, that before the Messias there should come a speciall Prophet, besides him that was spoken of, by the name of *Elias*. So it appeareth by that the multitude said on a time touching Christ: *This is of a truth the Prophet that should come into the world*^a, and in another place: *Of a truth this is the Prophet*^b. This error of theirs arose out of the words of *Moses*: *The Lord thy God will*

^x Matt. 14. 5.^y Matt. 21. 26.^z Ioh. 1. 21.^a Ioh. 6. 14.^b Ioh. 7. 40.

^c Deut. 18. 15.*The 1. Do-
ctrine.*

raise up unto thee a Prophet like unto mee from among you^c. Iohn therefore denieth himselfe to be a Prophet in that sense; he was no such Prophet as they looked for. This is the sense.

Now the doctrine is this; *That it is an estate of preferment and credit, for a man to be deputed to the calling and office of a Prophet and minister in the Church of God.* Marke how this ariseth out of this place. *Zacharie directeth his speech to Iohn:* He was now at the time of the speaking of these words an Infant, there was not then any great matter of outward circumstance in him to be taken notice of: yet notwithstanding (quoth *Zacharie*) euen thou O babe, little though thou now be, wrawling in thy cradle, and wrapt vp in clouts, shalt in time obtaine this honor, to be reputed and called a Prophet of the most high, a Preacher appointed by him to publish the doctrine of *saluation* to the world. Thus the manner of speaking, *Now thou art but a sillie babe, yet shalt thou live to beare the title of one of Gods Prophets,* serueth to iustifie this doctrine. There is nothing more effectually to the clearing of this point, than to consider the matter and businesse about which euery true minister of God is employed; which is not base or vulgar, but of as great weight and worth as may be: It is to *give knowledge of saluation, to publish peace^d, to declare to a man his righteousness^e, to save them that beleeue^f, to pray men in Christs stead to be reconciled to God^g, to gather together the Saints,* ^h to be Gods mouth to the people in preaching to them from God, and to be the peoples mouth againe in praying for them to Godⁱ. These are no base things, no vile seruices, no meane employments, to treat betwixt the Lord and his Church of no worse matter than the glorie of the one and the saluation of the other. Many things might easily be heaped vp to this purpose, but I will satisfie my selfe with this, and proceed to the vses of this point, which are three.

^d Ifay 52. 7.^e Iob 33. 23.^f 1. Cor. 1. 21.^g 2. Cor. 5. 20.^h Eph. 4. 12.ⁱ Deut. 33. 10.*The 1. Vse.*

The first is an admonition to those who haue by their place

place to doe in the electing and ordaining of *Ministers* for severall congregations ; They must remember the charge, *Lay hands suddenly on no man* ^k. The calling is honorable, and therefore not for every one hand over head to be admitted into. It is not meet that the passage into the ministry should lie open for whomsoever : *Who would might consecrate himselfe* ^l, it was one of the evils of *Ieroboams* time : It will lay the beauty of the calling in the dust, and make the world full of such wandring *Leuites*, as the yong man of *Bethlehem Iudah*, whom *Micah* hired for ten shekels of silver by the yeere, and a sute of apparell and meate and drinke ^m, which will be ready to serve the turne of every Church, spoiling patron, and to be at his deuotion, for a piece of silver and a morsell of bread ⁿ.

^k 1. Tim. 5. 22.

^l 1. Kin. 13. 33.

^m Iud. 17. 7. 10.

ⁿ 1. Sam. 2. 36. The 2. Vse.

The second vse, is an aduertisement to all that are entred into that function, to take diligent heed, that they doe nothing which may disgrace so honorable a calling. A minister is tied to watchfulnesse by a double bond; First, as he is a Christian, then as he is a minister : whosoever of *Aarons* seed had any blemish in him should not presse to offer before God ^o. Many things may be pardoned to others, which in vs will seeme intolerable. *If the salt haue lost his sauour, it is thencefoorth good for nothing* ^p. God grant that the eminency and dignity of our calling may beget in vs a steady care to doe nothing which may bring it into disgrace.

^o Leu. 21. 17.

^p Matth. 5. 13.

The 3. Vse.

Thirdly (for a third vse), this maketh against the contempt, which is generally cast vpon the ministry. Many scorne it in themselves, accounting it a base thing for them or their children to consecrate their life to the ministry of the Gospell. A cluster of the ciuill or common law, is better (in their seeming) than a whole vintage of Diuinity. It is *Pauls* rule, that we should be *had in singular loue for our workes sake* ^q. In the world it is otherwise, hated we be for our workes sake, and dispised for our professions sake ; It is the common Theme of many being in their cups, or

^q 1. Thes. 5. 13.

* Ier. 3. 15.

* 1. Cor. 4. 1.

* Luc. 10. 16.

nes J. prout ap

ex - Isa: 43 - Verba h
 ioritas in q' respice

in q' dicitur, ut

et dicitur, ut

in Angelus xp-

* Act. 10. 43.

* Ioh. 1. 29.

otherwise in want of matter to discourse of, to open their mouthes against the ministry. Be it so that some deserue ill enough : yet when men take a pleasure in these kinds of inueying, and seeke out of the misbehaviour of some to collect conclusions against all, it argueth that they speake not out of the hatred of euill, but out of enmity to the calling, thinking that they haue quit themselves well, if they can bring that into disgrace. Well, touching those which are faithfull, and make conscience to feed the people with *knowledge and understanding* : this I say, and yet not I but the Lord ; *Let a man so thinke of them as of the ministers of Iesus Christ, and disposers of the secrets of God* . The contempt reacheth high : *He that despiseth you despiseth mee* . It was *Iohns* honor, to be called a *Prophet of the most high*, why should it be any mans debasement to serue the same master, in the same businesse? Thus farre touching the first branch.

The second branch is the reason why *Iohn* should be stiled *A Prophet, &c* : *Thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his waies*. This is the true description of a Prophet or minister ; although in it some thing there was peculiar to *Iohn* ; notwithstanding true it is of all Prophets and ministers, that they goe before Christ. The Prophets of old went before Christ to bee borne, and they all bore witnesse of him, *that through his name all that beleue in him, should receiue remission of sinnes* . The ministers since Christ borne, goe before in respect of his second coming, to iudgment, to giue warning of it, and to make men readie for it. *Iohn* went more immediately before Christs face, because he was the very next Prophet before him, and liued to see him in his body, and with his finger to point to him, *Behold the lambe of God, which taketh away the sinnes of the world* . Now although it was peculiar to *Iohn*, thus immediately to goe before Christ, yet this is common to other ministers with him, to be messengers of Christ, and to make the people readie to receiue him. Hence ariseth this

doctrine;

doctrine; That it is the office and duty of the true Prophets and ministers of God, to draw disciples vnto Christ, and to prepare the people to receiue him. No man shall deserue the name of a Prophet vnlesse he so doe: He must professe himselfe to be Christs seruant, and must aime at the aduancement and setting vp of his kingdome. The acknowledgement of this truth may be seene in all the Prophets iointly: *They all gaue witnesse to Christ*^a: they all directed their course to this one thing, to beget in the peoples hearts an absolute dependance vpon only Christ. The same did the Apostles, both while Christ yet liued (for that was their errand when they were first sent out, *The kingdome of heauen is at hand*^z) and afterwards also, as may be obserued out of their generall course^a. Thence came the profession of Paul; *We preach not our selues, but Christ Iesus the Lord*^b. For this cause also it is set downe as the marke of Deceiuers, to draw to themselves, *to draw disciples after them*^c. Excellent is the similitude of the Apostle, to shew both his owne care and euery ministers duty: *I haue* (saith he) *prepared you for one husband, to present you as a pure virgine vnto Christ*^d. Often in Scripture is Christ compared to an husband, and the Church to a spouse: This life is the time of wooing, the last iudgement is the mariage day^e: Ministers are as seruants, or as *the bridegroomes friends*^f, to attend vpon the Church, and to treat of this spirituall mariage, and to seeke to aray and attire the people of God, with *the garments of saluation*^g, against that solemne day, in which they must be eternally vnited vnto Christ. Thus this is the duty of all ministers, not to seeke to set vp themselves, or to call the people to them, but to direct vnto Christ, saying, *Heare you him, and your soule shall liue*^h: *If any man sinne, he is the Advocate*ⁱ. We see the truth of this doctrine: now let vs enquire of what vse it may be.

First, as it admonisheth all Ministers to set themselves to the aduancement of Christs kingdome, so doth it plainly prooue the necessarie vse of the publike Ministerie. The

The 2. Doctrine.

^a Act. 10. 43.

^z Matt. 10. 7.

^a Act. 3. 12.

&c.

ch. 4. 11. 12.

ch. 14. 15.

ch. 17. 3.

^b 2. Cor. 4. 5.

^c Act. 20. 30.

^d 1. Cor. 11. 2.

^e Reu. 19. 7.

^f Ioh. 3. 29.

^g Isay 61. 10.

^h Isay 55. 3.

ⁱ 1. Ioh. 2. 1.

The 1. Vse.

* Ier. 17. 9.

† Matt. 3. 10.

m Eph. 2. 22.

n Act. 17. 18.

Scripture maketh no mention of any other outward ordinary meanes to prepare vs vnto Christ. Wee cannot prepare our selues (*for our hearts are wicked above all things*^a) and vnlesse we be prepared, Christ cannot be entertained: Wherefore looke of what necessitie the presence of Christ is vnto saluation, of the same (when we speake of an ordinarie course) is the Ministrie of the word: There is no saluation but by Christ, there is no way for Christ to enter in, vntill the word haue made vs ready to receaue him. To refuse Christ, is to reiect grace; to contemne the Word preached, is to keepe out Christ. Fetch we a similitude from Physicke: The learned Physician, intending a hol-some potion to his patient, first giueth him a preparatiue to fit his body to receaue it: If the preparatiue worke not, hee hath small hope to doe good with that which was to follow: So in this; Christ purposing saluation vnto vs, sendeth his Preachers before, to make way for grace, & to beget in vs a desire and expectation of mercy: If the Harbingers be reiected, if wee yeeld not to the course taken to prepare vs, there is no hope of Christ, there is no likelihood of saluation. This is the cause why the Ministrie of the Word is compared to an *Axe*[†], because as no beame is put into the building, vntill the worke-mans axe hath made it readie for the place where it must be; so no man is coupled in-to that spirituall frame (the body of Christ) to become *the habitation of God by the spirit*^m, vntill the axe of the Word haue pared off his corruption, and by hewing him againe and againe, haue made him fit for such a heauenly seruice. Take you heed therefore, all you despisers of Gods ordinance: the Preaching of the Word is a burthen vnto you, and euen a base thing in your seeming: you say of a Preacher, as the Athenians did of *Paul*, *What will this babler say*ⁿ? O that God might vouchsafe to open your eies, to see the diuels policie heerein! He will yeeld to you, that, professedly to reiect Christ were dangerous: but to scoffe and repine and murmur at the Word which you heare, he

maketh

maketh you beleue, that is nothing. Why will you suffer your selues to be beguiled? Can you receaue Christ before you be prepared? If you know your owne corruption, you will neuer thinke it: or can you (ordinarily) bee prepared but by the publike Ministrie? If you know and beleue the Scripture, you will neuer imagine it. When Christ commeth, his Word goeth before; let his Word bee reiect-
ed, and he will not be entertained. *Behold I stand at the doore and knocke* *: what knocking meaneth he, but this by his Word? and therefore it there followeth: *If any man heare my voice, &c.* If this Knocking be not regarded, hee himselfe doth neuer enter. It is vaine to say, I loue Christ, but him which preacheth Christ I doe not loue: Either such an one must prepare vs, or Christ Iesus will not dwell with vs.

* Reu. 3. 20.

Secondly, by this we may know, whether we haue truly profited by the Word which wee haue so often heard. Are our hearts made readie to receaue Christ, are we prepared to entertain him? We are profitable scholars. Is there no fitnesse in vs for this honorable guest? we haue lost our time, and our hearing hitherto hath beene in vaine. But, what is this to be prepared for Christ? for this may seeme to be spoken something too generally. The Prophet *Isaiah* well tell vs; namely, that we are prepared for Christ, when we are *Poore and of a contrite spirit, and tremble at the Word* *. A man is then readie for Christ, when his *soule thirsteth for him; and his flesh longeth greatly after him* †; when like the woman of Canaan, hee would be glad of a few crummes * of mercy; when with *Paul* he *counteth all things to be losse and dung that he may winne Christ* †; when he hath no minde of any thing so much as how hee may finde fauour with God; when his owne sinnes are euen a burden and a derestation vnto him, he euen quaketh in his owne conceit, to thinke how hee should doe, if God should call him to a strait account, and proceed against him in extremitie. Let vs proceed then: I demand of thee,

The 2. Use.

* Isay 66. 2.

† Psal. 63. 1.

* Matt. 15. 27

† Phil. 3. 8.

* Psal. 35. 3.

* Psal. 25. 16.

* Psal. 58. 4.

* Matth. 3. 11.

&c.

* Matth. 3. 3.

*The 3. Do-
ctrine.*

which hast now so long beene a hearer of the Word preached: Is it thus with thee? Hath thy heart beene plowed vp, and rent in sunder by the power of the Word, so that now the tidings of the Gospell are musicke to thine eares, and thy spirit within thee crieth out continually, *O say vnto my soule, I am thy saluation*^{*}; O my Saviour, *turne thy face vnto me and haue mercy vpon me, for I am desolate and poore*^u? It is an argument, that thou hast heard with profit, and maiest giue a comfortable account of thy hearing. Art thou of a dull and dead heart, not knowing out of thine owne priuate feeling what it is to long for Christ, and to thirst after his righteousness? Surely thy hearing hitherto hath beene fruitlesse, and thou art yet in thy finnes. And truely such are the most: Let the mysterie of Christ, and of grace in and by him be laid open vnto vs, neuer so exactly or comfortably, it doeth no more affect them, than any of the most idle tales that can be imagined. It is vnpossible, that men prepared for Christ, should, when Christ is preached, stop their eares, *like the deafe Adder*^{*}, and voluntarily betake themselves to a kinde of settled drowsinesse. Thus much of the reason, why *John* was to be called a *Prophet*, where we haue seene what is the vse and necessitie of the publike Ministrie.

The third branch followeth: wherein is taught, what it is, to *prepare the way of the Lord*; namely, to *giue knowledge of saluation to Gods people*. Now to *giue knowledge* in this place, is not, to *infuse knowledge*: (for no mortall man can doe that) but it signifieth to *giue notice*, and to publish in that maner, as that all may perceauue what is meant, and that, if they remaine ignorant, the fault may appeare to be their owne. This was the office of *John*, and this hee did, as appeareth in the holy Storie^{*}, and for that cause he was called a *Cryer*^{*}. The words thus expounded doe afford vs three doctrines.

The first is; *That he who desires to make way for Christ, and to draw disciples vnto him, must studie to be able to open to*

the

the people the hid treasure of the Scripture: Wee see heere, that it is the Ministers dutie to prepare the way for Christ; now to prepare a way for Christ, is to give knowledge of salvation: And what is that, but (as the Apostle speaketh) to publish the secret of the Gospell^a, and to lay foorth the mysterie of Christ in that maner, that euen the simple may attaine sharpnesse of wit, and children knowledge and discretion^b thereby? A minister is called an Ambassadour^c: and much is required to the discharge of an ambassage. He that shall be therein employed, must be a man of vnderstanding, able to treat to and fro of the affaires of his Soueraign as occasion shall be offered. The same is true in his spirituall message: He that carieth it had need to haue the tong of the Learned^d, and it were good, that his lips did preserve knowledge^e, that hee may be able to satisfie the doubts of those which desire certainty of information in Gods trueth. This made Elisha call him one of a thousand^f, and Paul to say, Who is sufficient for these things^g?

This may bee a good admonition to those which affect this calling: that they presse not rawly into it: Looke vnto it, that thou haue eat the role^h, that thy mouth be touchedⁱ, and thy heart filled with the right vnderstanding of the mysterie of Christ; otherwise thou canst haue no hope to prepare the way for Christ, or to winne soules vnto God.

The second doctrine from hence is; That the Minister desiring to prepare soules for Christ, must so preach in that plaine and familiar sort, as that (if it be possible) the knowledge of salvation may from him be deriued vnto all that heare him. This is iustificable by this place: For how shall a Minister be truely said to give knowledge of salvation, if he lap vp his speech in such a mist of words, that the meanest and shallowest among the hearers cannot vnderstand it? Such a kind of preaching is rightly compared, to a Trumpet giuing an uncertaine sound, at the hearing whereof no man can tel how or when to prepare himselfe to the battel^k:

^a Eph. 6. 19.

^b Pro. 1. 4.

^c 2. Cor. 5. 20.

^d Isay 50. 4.

^e Matt. 2. 7.

^f Iob 33. 23.

^g 2. Cor. 2. 16.

The Use.

^h Eze. 3. 1.

ⁱ Ier. 1. 9.

The 4. Doctrine.

^k 1. Cor. 14. 8.

1. Cor. 14. 19.

1. Cor. 1. 21.

1. Cor. 2. 1. 4.

2. Cor. 4. 3.

1. The. 2. 7.

The 1. Use.

1. Ion. 12. 41.

1. Cor. 14. 11

So if hee which speakes in publike, doe speake in such high termes & obscure phrales, that ordinarie men cannot conceiue what he intends, how shall they by his preaching be stirred vp to any good seruice, how shall they prepare themselves to fight against Satan? Hence was that worthy resolution of *Pauls*; *I had rather in the Church to speake few words &c. that I might also instruct others, than ten thousand words in a strange toong*: In which place by a *strange tongue*, may not only be vnderstood, the speaking of *Latin*; or *French*, or the like amongst English men, but the speaking of the mother tongue in such a strange fashion, that it may seeme all one to the hearers, as if one spake in the most vnknown language. The want of this painted eloquence brought *Pauls* preaching into disgrace among the learned *Grecians*, whence came that phrase, *The foolishnesse of preaching*; yet *Paul* still went on without excellency of words, or the enticing speech of mans wisdom, and affected only the plaine euidence of the spirit: so that this was no small comfort vnto him, that he had preached the Gospell after that familiar maner, that he might truly say, *If our Gospell be hid, it is hid vnto them that are lost*. It is a fit comparison, in which a Preacher is likened to a Nurse. Nurses doe halfe chew the meate to the little ones, and doe babble with them in their owne stammering and vnperfite language: so must a Preacher proportion his doctrine to his hearers capacity, and fit his tongue to their conceiuing; otherwise he shall neuer giue the knowledge of saluation, but shall rather make it more obscure.

This first belongeth as a reproofe to some, who (like the old *Pharisees*) louing the praise of men, more than the praise of God, soare so high, in such vncouth words, and in such an affected kind of eloquence, that they become as *Barbarians* vnto their hearers: It were all one if they preached to them in *Latin* or in *French*. Let all such remember, that their office is, to bring the people to the knowledge of saluation. Now the plainer the Preacher is, the sooner shall the

people

people be brought to the knowledge of saluation by his meanes.

Secondly, this discovereth the misconceit of many hearers; who, if a Preacher haue gallant words, and delightfull phrases, and interlace his sermon with other toongs, straightway admire him, as extraordinarily learned and profound. But I aske of thee, what knowledge of saluation hast thou got by such a sermon? how is thy vnderstanding holpen in the mistery of Christ? Thou wilt say (perhaps) that he was too deepe for thee. What good then shall he doe to thy soule, if, by hearing him, thou art brought no neerer to the knowledge of God than thou wast before? If thou wouldest heare for thy profit, pray to God to send thee such an one, which may speake to thy conscience, which may season thy heart with soundnesse of knowledge, and not tickle thy itching eares^r with pleasingnesse of words.

The third doctrine from hence is; That those which are ignorant in the true way and meanes of saluation, are not yet prepared for Christ, nor fit to entertaine him. The reason heereof is manifest by the text: *Iohn must prepare a way for Christ*; that is, he must make men ready to receiue Christ: How shall he doe that? By labouring to bring them to the knowledge of saluation: Therefore they which are not yet come so farre, as to know what is absolutely necessarie to saluation, are not come the first step towards Christ. It is truly said by the Apostle, that they whose cogitations are darkned, be strangers from the life of God^r. Heare what Christ saith; *This is life euermlasting, to know God to be the only very God, and whom he hath sent Iesus Christ*^a. Knowest thou not Christ, what he is, what he hath done, how that which he hath done may be auailable to thy soule? thou art not yet in the way to life eternall. This Paul begged of God for his hearers, *That they might be fulfilled with knowledge of Gods will in all wisdom and spirituall vnderstanding*^x, that they might be able to comprehend, what is

The 2. Vse.

^r 2. Tim. 4. 3.

The 5. Doctrine.

^r Eph. 4. 18.

^a Ioh. 17. 3.

^x Col. 1. 9.

1 Eph. 3. 18.
19.

The Use.

the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, &c.

This serveth to shew the inevitable danger of the common ignorance of the multitude. They beleue that they shall be saved, and yet have no skill in the doctrine of salvation; they hope upon Christ, and yet vnderstand not the mystery of Christ: Nay (which is worst of all) when the knowledge of salvation is offered to them, they doe with both hands put it from them, and doe aduisedly seeke to cherish and maintaine themselves in their wilfull blindness. We are not ashamed to say, *What needeth this knowledge, To what end is so much teaching?* Thou art laboured with from Sabbath to Sabbath, that thy heart may be seasoned with the knowledge of salvation, and that thou maist be prepared for Christ: if thou reiect this kindnesse, surely when thou comest to Christ, to seeke fauour from him, he will say to thee: *What hast thou to doe with me? depart from mee, I know thee not*: thou hast an ignorant heart, a heart hating knowledge, I cannot brooke thee.

* Matt. 7. 23.

* Pro. 1. 22.



THE NINTH SERMON.

---By the remission of their sinnes:

VERS. 78. *Through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited vs.*



He fourth branch commeth next in place, namely, how this *saluation*, the knowledge whereof must be giuen to Gods people, is wrought; and that is, *By the remission of sinnes*. In handling this point, I am thus to proceed: First. I must teach what Remissi-

on of finnes is. Secondly, I must prooue, that our saluation stands in the *Remission of finnes*. Thirdly, I must applie both to our vse.

Touching the generall nature of *remission of finnes*; It is an action of God, whereby for the merit of Christ he accounts sinne as no sinne, or, as if it had never beene committed. Hereupon it is, that when there is in Scripture speech made of *forgiuenesse of finnes*, such maners of speaking are vsed, which doe imply an vtter abolishment. *Thou hast cast all my finnes behind thy backe^b. I haue put away thy transgressions like a cloud, and thy finnes as a mist^c. I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their finnes no more^d. In those daies, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none^e. He will subdue our iniquities, and cast all our finnes into the bottom of the sea^f. Christ calleth it a *forgiuing our debts^g*, alluding to the maner of Creditors, who then forgive debts, when they account that which is debt, as no debt, and crosse the booke. Now the foundation of this *remission* is the merit of Christ. *In him we haue redemption through his blood, that is, the forgiuenesse of finnes^h. The blood of Iesus Christ cleanseth vs from all sinneⁱ*. That we may fully vnderstand this point how finnes are remitted by Christ and for him; it is to be noted, that in sinne there are three things: The first is the crime it selfe, or the swauing and straying from the will of God, by which God is offended. The second is, the guilt, by which the party offending is liable vnto eternall punishment. The third is, the staine or blot, which the sin committed leaueth in the offender; by which there followeth an aptnesse or prone-nesse either to the same sinne or to anie other. These three are taken away by the merit of Christ: The disobedience or crime, is taken away by his obedience. The guilt is remooued by his suffrings. The corruption hidden by his holinesse, and the very being of it daily diminished, and by the strength, power and working of his spirit. If it be demanded how this can be? I answer, it is done by imputa-*

^b Isay 38. 17.

^c Isay 44. 22.

^d Ier. 31. 34.

^e Ier. 50. 20.

^f Mic. 7. 19.

^g Matth. 6. 12.

^h Col. 1. 14.

ⁱ 1. Ioh. 1. 7.

tion, by which there is a kinde of translation or putting o-
uer of the beleeuers sinne vnto Christ, and of Christs righ-
teousnesse to the beleeuer. Christs obedience is accounted
the obedience of the beleeuer: Christs sufferings, the suf-
ferings of the beleeuer: Christs holinesse, the holinesse of
the beleeuer. And so God accounteth Christs obedience,
passion and holines to be the beleeuers, as much as if they
were really in him, and as if he himselfe had actually and
personally performed the same. The right vnderstanding
of this point is the key of Religion, and the staffe of all
true comfort in Christ Iesus.

*The 1. Do-
ctrine.*

^k Psa. 32.1.

^l Psa. 38.4.

^m Rom. 6.23.

The 1. Use.

Now the second thing to be opened (which is indeed
the doctrine of the place) is; *That saluation stands in the
Remission of sinnes.* And this is iustified by that saying of the
Psalme; *Blessed is the man whose wickednesse is forgiven, and
whose sinne is couered*^k. Now looke wherein stands hap-
pinesse, therein stands saluation: for what happinesse
is there besides saluation? And the reason of the do-
ctrine is apparent. Man was first cast out of Paradise for
sinne; neither doth any thing hinder his returne but onely
sinne: for so long as his sinnes remaine, they are as a *waigh-
tie burden*^l, to presse him downe to hell, and his *wages* and
stipend is eternall *Death*^m. Therefore if sinne bee taken
away and pardoned, God hath against him no matter of
displeasure, and Christs obedience being imputed to him,
heauen cannot bee denied him, hee must needes be saued.
This may briefly serue to make plaine this doctrine.

The first vse of it, is to strengthen vs in a notable point,
which is, that in the matter of saluation, all merit and de-
sert of our owne workes, are vtterly excluded: The ground
whereof is in this place very expresse. For I demand:
wherein doth that *saluation* stand, which must be published
by the minister in the Church of God? *Zachary* answereth,
that it stands in the *remission* of sinnes. Now, desert and
remission cannot agree: If my plea for saluation must be,
the pardon of my sinnes, where is my merit? If I haue sal-

uation

uation by desert of workes, I haue it vpon right: but if I obtaine it by the pardon of my sinnes, I haue it wholly vpon courtesie. This is a direct kind of reasoning: and it is iustified by *S. Pauls* course. His maine proposition is, that *a man is iustified by faith, without the workes of the law*^a. This he proueth (as by other reasons, so) by a testimony fetched out of the two and thirtieth Psalme. *Euen as David* (saith he) *declares the blessednesse of the man vnto whom God imputeth righteousness without workes &c.*^b. *David* placeth happinelle in the remission of sinnes: If in remission of sinnes, what place is left for workes in this businesse? And this is the expresse doctrine of the Scripture: *Eternall life is the gift of God*^c: and what is more free than gift? *By grace are ye saued through faith, &c. not of workes, lest any man should boast himselfe*^d. *Not by the workes of righteousness which we had done, but according to his mercy be saued vs*^e. If any workes might deserue, what more meritorious than the sufferings of Martyrs? yet *the afflictions of this present time, are not worthy of the glorie, which shall be shewed vnto vs*^f. This is directly against the doctrine of Popery, which is not ashamed to maintaine, that *Workes are the proper cause of life euermlasting*^g. Let Papist (if they can) reconcile and make these agree, how saluation can be grounded vpon the forgiuenesse of sinnes, and yet be ours by the dignity of our workes. They crie out against vs in regard of this doctrine two waies. First, that life eternall and saluation are often in Scripture promised as the reward of good workes, and that therefore life eternall is of merit. I answer, that reward is twofold. First, of fauour. Secondly, of debt. So *S. Paul* himselfe doth distinguish^h. Now *life eternall*, is a reward of fauour: *It is the gift of God*ⁱ. Indeed in the matter of saluation God hath made himselfe a debter: But how? By his free promise, not by the merit of any worke. If he hath vouchsafed to promise life eternall to our obedience, it is true we may claime it as due, but not because of the excellencie of our obedience, but because of

^a Rom. 3.28.

^b Rom. 4.6.

^c Rom. 6.23.

^d Eph. 2.8.9.

^e Tit. 3.5.

^f Rom. 8.18.

^g *Rhem Test.*
in Gal. 6.9.

^h Rom. 4.4.

ⁱ Rom. 6.23.

r Col. 3. 24.

r Eph 2. 10.

r Lam. 2. 26.

b Gal. 5. 6.

c Tit. 2. 14.

d Tit. 3. 14.

the truth and strength of the promise. Very effectually is that phrase of the Apostles, when he calleth life eternall, a *Reward of inheritance*^r: which prooves, that God doth not giue it for Works, as a thing by them deserued, but because we are become his children by the free grace of adoption. Secondly, they crie out, that by this meanes we destroy good Works. I answer, that that is a meere vntruth. For wee say, that none can bee saued without good Works, because *God hath ordained them that we should walke in them*^r; we teach, that that *Faith* is vaine and dead^a, which doth not worke by loue^b: For albeit we must not bee zealous in good works^c, with an hope to merit thereby, yet we know and preach, that there are sundry *necessarie uses*^d of them, for which they ought not to bee neglected. So then this is the first vse of this doctrine, to establish vs in the doctrine of free iustification without works. If I would bee saued, the pardon of my sins, the hiding and couering of mine own actions, is the thing which I must seek after: therefore what warrant haue I to relie vpon my own deseruing? This is needfull to be noted, because this error goeth farre, and too too many doe trust to their owne deeds. If thou wouldest be saued, this must be thy Plea: *O Lord I haue sinned, euen in my best courses, I beseech thee for Christ to pardon mee: and not, Lord behold this I haue done, thus I haue deserued, therefore I require thee of thy iustice to reward me.*

The 2. Vse.

e Pro. 7. 6.

The second vse, is matter of exhortation to euerie one of vs. For behold, our saluation stands in the remission of sinnes: Dost thou then desire to be saued? then thou must labour that thy sinnes may bee pardoned: This followeth necessarily. It is a wofull thing to looke vpon the most: They pretend an expectation and a desire of saluation; talke with them, they will say they desire it and pray for it: yet of all other things, *Remission of sinnes*, is that which is least laboured for. If any man should with *Salomon*, stand in the window of his house, and looke^e and consider the

courses

courses of men, how should hee see them employed? Some gaping after wealth, some struing to become great, and to set their *nest on hye*^f, some running after vaine delights, some plotting and studying for reuenge, some drinking, some gaming, some playing the wantons, some pranking vp themselves, all of them guiltie before God, of more sinnes than there be grasse piles vpon the earth, and yet scarcely any one seriously busying himselfe about this, how his sinnes may bee pardoned, and his iniquities couered. If we should see a malefactor guiltie of many capitall trespasses, taken and imprisoned, and the day of the assise approching, and yet the same man to be secure and iocund and gamsome, would wee not all condemne him for a desperate person, and say, we wondered how he could be so merrie, hauing so many foule matters to be put in against him, and not knowing how to escape? yes doubtles. And yet euen so is the case with vs: *Our sinnes are more in number than the haire of our head*^g; taken we be, and cannot hide our selues from the Lord, (for *whither shall we flee from his presence*^h? answer to particulars wee cannot, to endure the triall is a thing vnpossible; for if thou, O Lord, straitly markest iniquities, O Lord who shall standⁱ? and, can thine heart endure, or can thy hands be strong in the daies that I shall haue to do with thee^k? The very sight of the Iudge at the day of reckning, will make vs say to the mountaines, Fall on vs, and to the hills, Couer vs^l. What then shall we say of our owne selues, who for all this, sleepe vpon the elbowes of our owne securitie, and put these things farre from our thoughts, and neuer goe about to sue out a discharge, and to bee comfortable secured in our consciences of Gods fauour? This securitie cannot be excused; well may we sleepe in our negligence, but our *Damnation sleepeth not*^m, and wee shall surely perish in our carelesnesse. Thou wilt say (perhaps) vnto me; You speake much of my negligence, you blame me for not seeking the pardon of my sinnes, but you

^f Hab. 2. 9.

^g Psal. 41. 12.

^h Psal. 139. 7.

ⁱ Psal. 130. 3.

^k Ezek. 22. 14.

^l Luc. 23. 30.

^m 2. Pet. 2. 3.

1. Ioh. 1. 9.

Lam. 3. 40.

Psal. 51. 3. 4.

Ezra 9. 6.

Dan. 9. 7.

Luc. 15. 21.

Hos. 14. 3.

teach mee not the way by which I might obtaine this fauor. Harken therefore, whosoever thou art, which desirest to be instructed in this thing. There is none can forgive sinnes but God; the only person, in and by whom sinnes are pardoned, is Christ Iesus. The meanes of obtaining pardon from God the Father by Christ, is set downe briefly by S. Iohn: *If we acknowledge our sinnes, he is faithfull and iust to forgive vs our sinnes*. Thus then thou must proceed if thou desire *Remission of sinnes*: First, thou must vse a diligent and serious examination of thine owne heart by the law of God, to see how the case standeth with thee, and what sinnes and corruptions thou art guiltie of: This the Scripture teacheth; *Let vs search and try our waies*. Secondly, thou must in thine own thoughts arraigne thy selfe before God, supposing that euen now the day of reckning were, and thou wert now instantly to answer before God. Thirdly, thou must put vp an accusation against thy selfe, ripping vp all thy knowne sinnes, without lessening them, without excusing them, without hiding them, without taking .pon thee to defend them: Thus did David; *I know mine iniquities, and my sinne is ever before me. Against thee, against thee only haue I sinned &c*. Thus did Ezra; *Our iniquities are increased ouer our head, and our trespass is growne vp to the heauen*. Fourthly, thou must goe on, to giue the sentence against thy selfe, acknowledging that thou art worthy of euerlasting death and condemnation. Thus did Daniel; *O Lord vnto vs belongeth open shame*: Thus did the Prodigall, *I am no more worthy to be called thy sonne*. Fifthly, thou must with as much earnestnes as thou possibly canst, entreate the Lord for Christs sake to pardon thee, and neuer leaue him, till he giue this blessed answer to thy conscience, that all thy sinnes are cleane put out of his remembrance. Thus we are taught to doe; *Take vnto you words, and turne to the Lord, and say vnto him, Turne away all iniquity and receiue vs graciously*. Thus did Daniel; *O my God encline thine care and heare &c. O Lord*

heare,

heare, O Lord forgive, O Lord consider &c^a. Lastly, thou must begge grace and strength to be able to walke in newnesse of life. So did David; *Let thy good spirit lead me into the land of righteousness^a*. This is the only way to obtaine remission of sinnes, if we would be saved, this is a thing which ought dayly to be done; we must be ever reckning with our selues, still asciting ourselues before God, still laying open our corruptions before him, still bewailing our weakenesses, still suing for mercy, still labouring that our sinnes may be shaken off, and the graces of God increased in vs. Are these strange things to our knowledge, strange to our practise, haue we neuer thought vpon taking this serious and strict and thorow course with our selues? surely our sinnes doe yet hang vpon the file in Gods high court, the bill against vs is vncancelled, and in the day of account we cannot escape. It is my duty to giue knowledge of saluation, and to teach that our saluation stands in the remission of sinnes, and to shew you the way how this remission may be obtained: and God forbid that I should cease to shew you the good and the right way^r. If now, when the way is thus sanded foorth vnto you, you will say, as they did of old, *We will not walke therein^a*, you must suffer mee to conclude with Moses, *I call heauen and earth to record against you, this day, that you shall shortly perishe^a*. Thus much for the fourth branch.

The fift is the fountaine out of which this saluation, which stands in the remission of sinnes, doth flow, in those words, *Through the tender mercy of our God*. The phrase of speech here is very effectuall. For Zachary satisfieth not himselfe to say *mercy*, but he mentioneth, *Bowels of mercy*. It is spoken after the maner of men, to note out an exceeding tenderesse and inwardnesse of compassion, such as is, when a pitifull person his very bowels yearne and are mooued within him, to behold some wofull or distressed spectacle. So the *mercy* of God in this case is not ordinarie, but more full of commiseration, than any

^a Dan. 9. 18.

19.

^a Psal. 143. 10.

^r 1. Sa. 13. 23.

^a Ier. 6. 16.

^a Deut. 4. 26.

The 2. Doctrine.

^b Rom. 9. 23.

^c Eph. 2. 1. 3.
4. 5.

^d 1. Tim. 1. 13
^e 1. Pet. 1. 3.

^f Rom. 11. 5.
^g 2. Tim. 1. 9.
^h Phil. 1. 29.
ⁱ Rom. 3. 24.

^k Phil. 2. 13.
^l Rom. 6. 23.

^m Isay 42. 25.

ⁿ Eph. 2. 3.
^o Rom. 5. 10.
^p Gen. 6. 5.
^q Rom. 8. 6.
^r Tit. 1. 16.

^s Gen. 32. 11.

man possibly can imagine. Hence are we taught that, (which hath beene often touched in this Hymne) namely, *That the supreme cause, the first root of our saluation, is the riches of Gods mercy, the tenderneſſe of his voluntary and free compassion towards vs.* Hence is it that the elect are called *Vessels of mercy*^b, because the whole worke of their saluation, can be ascribed to no other thing but only to mercy. Excellent is the place of the *Apostle*^c; Thus and thus we were by nature, dead in trespasses and in sins, children of wrath &c. Whence is it that we are brought into a better estate? God, which is rich in mercy &c. hath quickned vs, &c. Paul saith of himselfe that he had sometimes beene a blasphemer, and a persecuter and an oppressor: whence came it, that he was not so still? was it from himselfe? no: *I was reccined to mercy*, saith he^d. *Blessed be God &c. which according to his abundant mercy &c.*^e. The Scripture is very precise in this point, in ascribing euery specialty to Gods mercy and free grace. Touching election, it is called *the election of grace*^f. Touching vocation, it is said to be *according to grace*^g. Touching faith, it is said to be *giuen*^h. Touching iustification, it is said to be *freely by Gods grace*ⁱ. Touching euery good motion, it is said, that it is *God which worketh it*^k. Touching life eternall, it is termed *a gift*^l. The holy Scripture laboureth in nothing more, than to prooue that God was moued by nothing in the matter of mans saluation, but only by his mercy. *I, euen I, am he that putteth away thine iniquities for mine owne sake*^m. And indeed if our naturall estate be considered, it must needs be, that all will be ascribed to mercy: *Children of wrath*ⁿ, *Enemies to God*^o, *our imaginations onely euill*^p, *our wisdom death*^q, *Reprobate to euery good worke*^r. What was there (thinke we) to induce God, or to encline or bend him to doe ought for vs? how must not all needs be said to flow from his free mercy? Euery spirituall man may truly say in respect of spirituall things, as *Iacob* did of his wealth, *God hath had mercy on mee, and therefore I haue all these things*^s; or as the

Church

Church acknowledgeth; *Lord thou hast wrought all our workes for us*.

Is

Isay 26.12.

The 1. Vse.

Rom. 11. 6.

The vse is, still to maintaine the glory of God, and to beate downe the naturall pride and presuming of mans heart: merit and grace can neuer agree^a: that which is by *mercy* is not by *workes*, that which is by *workes* is not by *mercy*. And know we this, that we haue made great proceedings in godlinesse, when we haue learned out of the due consideration of our owne spirituall weaknesse, and out of the liuely apprehension of our owne lost and desperate estate, effectually and affectionately to acknowledge, that had it not beene for the vnspeakeable riches of Gods mercy, we could neuer haue come one piece of a step towards heauen. And indeed, vntill a man is come to the effectuall acknowledgement and vnderstanding of an absolute miserie in himselfe, without any power left in himselfe, so much as by a thought to wish or further his owne true good, he may prate of the mercy of God, but he can neuer truly and comfortably apprehend it. God is so ielous of it, that if we goe about to temper any other thing therewith more or lesse, the sweetnesse thereof is vtterly lost.

Secondly, this may be a comfort vnto vs, that looke how much we take from our naturall humor by giuing all to Gods mercy, so much we adde to our spirituall settlednesse, and doe make the estate of our soules so much the surer. For, if that which had the first beginning from Gods mercy, were by our endeouours to be perfited, we might wel doubt of our saluation; but when we rely wholly vpon Gods mercy, there is no cause of feare: because the mercy of God is (as himselfe) perpetuall and vnalterable. There is nothing in vs that began it, there is nothing in vs that can alter it.

The 2. Vse.

The sixth branch now followeth, touching the especial fruits of this tender mercy of our God: and that is, that *thereby the day-spring from on high hath visited vs*. Here we must

* Num 24.17
 7 Mal. 4. 2.

enquire. 1. What the *day-spring* is. 2. Who is meant by it. 3. Why it is said to be *from on his*. First, by *Day-spring* is meant literally, the first appearance and breaking of the day, in the East part of heaven, foretelling the neere rising and approching of the Sunne. Secondly, by *Day-spring* is spiritually vnderstood Christ Iesus. It seemeth that *Zacharie* had reference to the ancient Prophecies, touching a *starre that should come of Iacob* *, and of a *Sunne of Righteousnes which should arise* *. Thirdly, it is said to be *from on his*, to teach vs from whence this refreshing commeth, not from earth, not from *below*, not from the deuce or procurement of Man; but from Heaven, from the free grace and mercy and power of God: And it is also said to *visite vs*; to note out (as hath beene before obserued) our wofull extremitie without Christ: inasmuch as the word (*visite*) doeth ordinarily betoken a sicke and distressed estate in those which are visited. So that this is the sense; that by the great mercy of God, it is come to passe, that Christ Iesus, (who is the light and comfort of his Church) hath broken forth, and hath cast out his beames for the refreshing and cheering of our soules.

The 3. Doctrine.

If this clause were to bee handled apart, manie things might be gathered thence: but treating of it now with the rest, and so, neither repeating out of it things already touched, nor yet raising from it such points as that which followeth will giue vs more full occasion to consider, these are the chiefe things to bee noted hence. First, *That the coming of Christ into the World, to worke our saluation, is the principall euidence and the chiefe fruit of Gods mercie.* Consider how this is raised. *Zacharie* had spoken of the *bowels of Gods mercy*, that is, of the deepest measure of his grace and compassion: Now, as an instance and prooffe thereof, he doth insist especially vpon this, the rising of the *Sunne of Righteousnesse* Christ Iesus. As if he had said: Many waies is the mercy of God made knowne vnto vs, the earth is full of it, but this exceeds all, that hee hath enlightened

enlightened the World by his Sonne, and hath visited vs with so great saluation To this agreeth the speech of Paul, *God setteth out his loue toward vs, seeing, &c. Christ died for vs*^a. His meaning is, that in other things the mercy of God is not obscure, but the mystery of Christ is (as it were) a stage, vpon which he hath set it forth, that all men might behold in it the fulnesse therof. *In this (saith Iohn) appeared the loue of God, because he sent his onely begotten Sonne into the World &c*^a. In this: meaning, that although it appeareth in other things, yet in this especially. The reason is plaine: It is the mercy of God, that we liue and breath, and enioy health and peace. In these things Gods loue is to be seene; but what were these without Christ, according to that saying; *What shall it profit a man, though hee should winne the whole world, if hee lose his owne soule*^b? All other comforts without an interest into Christ, doe but helpe to encrease our condemnation.

^a Rom. 5.8.

^a 1.Ioh.4.9.

^b Matt.16.26.

This serueth to discouer our folly. Of all the mercies of God, that, of Christ is the chiefest; yet of all the rest it is least sought for. We are (the most) right of the Epicures minde, if the sides and belly be well, let the rest goe how it will. Heerein we are like children, who looke vpon the babies in a booke, but care not for the matter. These outward things are but toies and trifles in comparison, them we gaze vpon, vpon them we doe euen fix our desires. It ought not to be so, neither indeed is it so with true Christians: they are like *Dauid*; who when he beheld the men of his time, reioycing in their *Wheat* and their *Wine*, cried out, *Lord lift vp the light of thy countenance vpon mee*^c, as it were scorning all things els in respect of that. Remember we then: This is the height of Gods mercy, that hee hath giuen vs Christ; let it be the height, yea, the verie All, of our desires to enioy Christ. Of all cares, let this bee our chiefe care, how we may be saued.

The Vse.

^c Psal.4.6.

Another point obseruable hence is; *The stablenesse and unchangeablenesse of that worke of saluation which is wrought*

The 4. Doctrine.

- by Christ Iesus: It must be so, seeing it is said to be *from on hie*; out of heauen and from God: Apply to it wee may that rule of Gamaliel: *If this counsell bee of God, yee cannot destroy it*^a: so this thing, is *from on hie*, it hath fetched the beginning from God, therefore it cannot bee frustrated. All things vnder the Moone are subiect to change, the things aboue are firme and immutable. This is Pauls reasoning touching the certainty of *saluation*^c. He goeth vp on hie to the foundation of all, Gods eternall Predestination, that is vchangeable, therefore their Iustification is firme, therefore their Glorification is certaine. Hymeneus and Philetus by their false doctrine destroyed the faith of certain (for it was not built vpon the Rocke) but *The foundation of God remaineth sure*, saith the Apostle^d.
- This is, first, a great comfort to all true beleeuers: Their saluation dependeth not vpon vncertainties: hee is come *from on hie*, which hath vndertaken it. This is an *Anchor of the soule both sure and stedfast*^e. *Your life is hid with Christ in God*^h. The course was framed in heauen, all the strength and power of hell cannot dissolue it.
- Secondly, this (*from on hie*) may be a good admonition to vs, if we desire a part with Christ, to labour to pul & retire our affections from earthly things. So reasoneth Paul; *If ye be risen with Christ, seeke the things which are aboue*ⁱ. Our *saluation is from on hie*, and therefore wee must labour to looke vpwrd: It was the speech of Christ: *You are from beneath, &c*^k, meaning, that because they were such as did saueur onely of earthly things, therefore Religion and grace could not enter into their hearts: If we euer be like swine, muzzling in the ground, and like the Mole or Want, burying our selues in the earth, we make our selues vnfit for the kingdome of God: The Church hath the *Moone vnder her feet*^l: Shee despiseth and setteth light by all the riches, glory, pompe and carnall pleasures of this world: And indeed still, the higher a man laboureth to lift vp his thoughts to heauenly things, the baser will these
- earthly

^a Act. 5. 39.^c Rom. 8. 33.^d 2. Tim. 2. 19.

Ths 1. Vse.

^e Heb. 6. 19.^h Col. 3. 3.

The 2. Vse.

ⁱ Col. 3. 1.^k Ioh. 8. 23.^l Reu. 12. 5.

earthly things seeme to be vnto him: as when one climeth a high tower or hill, the higher hee doth mount, the lesse doth euery thing appeere which is below him.



THE TENTH SERMON.

V E R S. 79. *To giue light to them that sit in darknesse and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feete into the way of Peace.*



E are now come vnto the seuenth and last branch, namely, the special end why this *Day-spring* hath appeared, which is, *To giue light, &c.*

The summe of the place is, A kindnesse or benefit bestowed: the partie by whom it is bestowed wee haue heard of: (*The Day-spring from on his*). Now we haue heere two things to bee considered of: 1. The state and condition of the parties to whom it is giuen (*they sit in darknesse and in the shadow of death*). 2. The qualitie of the benefit, (*To giue light, and, to guide into the way of peace.*) The former sheweth how miserable we be without Christ: The latter, what happinesse is offered to vs in Christ.

In handling the former wee must first enquire the sense, namely, what is meant by *Darknesse*, and what by the *shadow of Death*. The word (*Darknesse*) must not bee taken literally, for any outward, materiall, earthly or sensible darknesse; such as is when the heauens are ouerwhelmed

P

with

The Abridgement of the Gospel.

^m Eph. 1. 18.
ⁿ Psal. 97. 11.

^c Ioh. 3. 10.
^p Eph. 4. 18.

^q Isay 5. 30.
^r Matt. 8. 12.

with clouds, the Sunne set, the starres hidden, and the Moone not appearing, and neither fire nor candle to be gotten. But it must be taken in a spirituall sense, with reference to the inward parts, to the soule and conscience. And being so taken, it betokeneth two things. 1. Want of true saving knowledge: 2. Want of true spirituall comfort. Thus *Light*, in Scripture is taken: first, for true knowledge. *That the Eyes of your understanding may be lightened^m*: Secondly for true comfort: *Light is sown for the Righteous, and joy for the upright in heartⁿ*. So also darknesse, is put for the contrarie. First, for Ignorance: *Men loved darknesse rather than Light^c*: *Having their cogitation darkened^p*. Secondly, for amazednesse and perplexitie of spirit: *If they looke to the earth, behold darknesse and sorrow^q*. Therefore Hell, which is the seat of Horror, is called *Darknesse^r*. So then by those which sit in darknesse, are meant those which lie buried in ignorance and blindness, utterly destitute of all true spirituall consolation.

Now to this, there is added another clause, (*The shadow of death.*) A phrase vsuall in Scripture, signifying an estate brought, as it were, within the coastes and borders, and (as I may so speake) within the reach of death. So that the meaning of both clauses together is this; That those to whom Christ hath appeared as a Saviour, were without knowledge, without comfort, without any meanes or possibilitie of life eternall in themselves. This is the sense.

Heere then is ample occasion given to speake of our naturall estate without Christ: The miserie whereof stands in three things. 1. Want of true knowledge. 2. Want of true comfort. 3. Subiection and liablenesse to death eternall. That these three are all true of euery naturall man, I will declare briefly.

The 1. Doctrine.

^r Eph. 4. 18.
^s Tit. 2. 2.

And first, *That enery naturall man is destitute of true knowledge*, the Scripture speaketh plainly. *Paul saith, that naturally our Cogitations are darkened through Ignorance^r*: *that we are unwise^s*, that is, such as vnderstand not *What*

the

The Tenth Sermon.

III

the will of the Lord is ^a: that the Wisedome of our flesh is death and enmitie against God ^z: that we neither perceiue, nor can know the things of the spirit of God ^y. And of this ignorance we haue examples; as in *Nicodemus*, who could not tell what to make of the doctrine of Regeneration ^z; and in the learned Athenians, who *macked* at that which *Paul* taught touching the *Resurrection* ^z. The most points of Religion seeme to flesh and bloud, vnreasonable, absurd, vnlikely. Man hath no knowledge of God by nature, but onely so much as may serue to condemne him.

^a Eph. 5. 17.
^z Rom. 8. 6. 7.
^y 1. Cor. 2. 14.

^z Ioh. 3. 9.

^a Act. 17. 31.

We are taught by this, first, to disclaime all opinion of freewill, that is, of power in man (of himselfe) to embrace and to entertaine good when it is offred. This is certaine, that where the minde of man hath no power to conceiue, there the will hath no power to embrace. Now it is prooued heere that we are all in *darknesse*; nay euen *darknesse* it selfe ^b. We are possessed with that extreme ignorance and dulnesse in the things of God, that (of our selues) we cannot vnderstand them: Therefore, as God must first enlighten our mindes, before we can conceiue any good, so hee must first bend and frame and new mould our willes, before wee can truely affect, nay before wee can once encline or leane towards the same. Let the patrons of Freewill see how they can reconcile these things, namely, that man should naturally lie groueling in a thicke mist of spirituall darknesse, and yet should haue power in himselfe to chuse that which is good, without speciall and particular enabling.

The 1. Vse.
cognitio in intellectu
elation in voluntate

^b Ephes. 5. 8.

Secondly, this aduiseeth vs, not to admit our owne sence and conceit as a Iudge in matters of Religion. The blinde (we say) is vnfit to iudge of colours, and naturall man, to determine of holy things. Hee that will beleue nothing, but that which his owne reason shall approoue, nor doe nothing more than his owne corrupt affection shall encline vnto, shall neuer beleue so much as hee ought, nor practise the one halfe of that which is required. A great

The 2. Vse.

^c Matt. 16. 24.

^d Psal. 119.

10. 12. 133.

The 3. Vse.

^e Matt. 8. 12.

cause of mens disobedience in religion, is, that they consult with flesh and blood, that is, about matters of the soule, they consult with that which is the greatest enemy to the soule. The first lesson to be learned by a Christian is, to *deny himselfe* ^a. It ought to satisfie thee that God hath so commanded, so spoken, so reuealed: whether it be agreeable to reason or no, it is all one: Say with *Peter*, *At thy word I will doe this, or I will beleeue that*. Happie is he, who being priuy to his owne spirituall blindnesse, can stretch out his hand to the Lord, and say with *Dauid*, *Teach mee, Direct my steps in thy word: Let me not wander from thy Commandments* ^d.

Thirdly, we are heereby let to see what they doe which please themselves in their ignorance. What is it, but a delighting in their owne miserie? It is as if a man should content himselfe to lie in the bottome of a darke stinking dungeon, euen when there is meanes offered to release him. What is the chiefe part of our naturall misery? Is it not this, that we *sit in darknesse*? But what *darknesse* is it? Our senses doe tell vs, it is not any outward, bodily darknesse, which is meant: It cannot bee any, but the *darknesse* of the soule. And what is the *darknesse* of the soule but Ignorance and dulnesse? Faith is the eye of the soule, and knowledge the ground of Faith. You then, which wilfully muzzell your selues in ignorance, which desire not to bee better taught, which are wearie of the meanes of knowledge; what doe you, but euen resolute with your selues to lie still in *darknesse*, and to rush your selues into that *Vtter darknesse*, where nothing will bee besides *Weeping and gnashing of teeth* ^e. Remember wee then, that as by nature in respect of sinne, wee are of all creatures the most miserable, so one branch of our miserie is the darknesse of ignorance, the want of true sauing knowledge: if we doe willingly and contentedly cherish our selues therein, and refuse to vnderstand the things which belong vnto our Peace, it is all one as if we should

say,

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say, *Wee will not be saved; Hell shall bee more welcome unto vs then eternall life.*

The second part of our naturall miserie, is, *The want of true comfort.* There is no peace to the wicked, saith Godⁱ. The conscience, naturally, being not yet renewed and purged by Christs blood, hath in it, one of these two evils; Senselesnesse, or Amazednesse: Either it is blockish and benumbed and feeleth nothing, and so passeth on in a kinde of drowsinesse and securitie, like an *Oxe that goeth to the slaughter*^b; or els it is perplexed and distracted with inward horror, not knowing which way to turne it selfe for any true refreshing: And the reason is this; In euery naturall heart, Sathan reigneth and *worketh*^a, and Christ is a stranger from it. Now where the King of confusion reigneth, and where the *Prince of Peace*ⁱ is a stranger, what comfort can bee looked for? Againe, the foundation of all true comfort, is the perswasion of Gods loue in the forgiuenesse of sins; but this, I am sure, doth not grow in natures garden. And thirdly, let a soule be wounded, a heart pricked, a conscience astonished, with the apprehension of sin, and with *the Terror of the Lord*^k, all the wit, of all the wisest men in the World, out of their owne reason cannot comfort it. This is a lim of our natural darknesse. Let vs once be touched with inward sorrow, let nature doe her best, let carnall reason stretch it selfe to the utmost pin, yet shall we be swallowed vp with dismaiednes.

This teacheth vs, what we must doe, when as in sickness, losse, disgraces, and in any other sadnesse, and sullenesse of spirit we desire refreshing. If wee aske counsell of Nature or of carnall friends, what direction shall we receaue? Companie, Musicke, discourse, gaming, and things of the like nature; which are like to water taken by one sicke of a burning feuer, which cooleth a little at the first, but after encreaseth the heat: or to stickes caught at by a man readie to be drowned, which promise some hope of helpe, but yet faile in the vse, and

The 2. Doctrine.

ⁱ Isay 57.21.

^b Pro. 7.22.

^a Eph. 2.2.

ⁱ Isay 9.6.

^k 1. Cor. 5.11.

The Vse.

¹ 2. Cor. 1. 3.² Ps. 119. 92.³ Isay 36. 6.*The 3. Do-
ctrine.*⁴ Rom. 5. 12.⁵ Rom. 6. 23.⁶ Gen. 2. 17.*The Vse.*⁷ Lam. 2. 19.

perish with him that trusted to them. If wee desire true comfort, we must goe out of our selues, and looke vpward, to him, who is the *God of all consolation*¹. In his word we must meditate: *Except (saith David) thy Law had been my delight, I should now have perished in mine affliction*². The cause of mens deadnesse in the day of sorrow, is their dependance vpon carnall meanes (*the reed of Egypt*³) while in the meane time they neglect the principall.

The third part of our naturall miserie, is *subiection to eternall death*. *Death is gone over all men*⁴: and, *The wages of sinne is death*⁵. God told *Adam*, that *in the day that hee did eat the forbidden fruit, hee should die the death*⁶. Now inasmuch as wee haue all taken part with this disobedience, we haue all a share in this punishment. This punishment is called *Death*, not because it is an utter abolishment of the Being of the creature (happie were it for the wicked if it were so) but it is so called, because the soule is eternally separated from God, who is the fountaine of life and happinesse, and by that meanes, it is euer dying, but dieth neuer, wishing a dissolution, but can neuer obtaine it.

The vse heereof is to humble vs, and to abate our naturall pride. Among men, if we see one that is a begger by birth, to be proud, and lifting vp himselfe, wee account it intolerable. Put case some one were borne to bee a slaue or a drudge, we would thinke such an one had little cause of boasting: Yet such is the naturall condition of vs all. The *shadow and darknes* of eternall death, is our best inheritance. Let God giue vs our right, and what portion can wee expect but the fire of hell? It is natures desert, nay it is euen the desire of nature, to be plunged into it. Why are we secure, whom our sinnes haue cast into such a dismall estate? Thou pridest thy selfe in thy birth, thou in thy wealth, thou in thy wit, thou in thy painted sheath and gay clothing, and considerest not, thy best desert what it is, and whereto it tends: whereas thou oughtest rather, to *powre out thy heart like water before the face of the Lord*⁷,

and

and to crie with *David: Save me O God; Deliver me out of th emire, that I sinke not: Let not the pit shut her mouth vpon me*.

Thus much touching the state of the parties, vpon whom Christ bestoweth the benefit of saluation: where we see what we are all by nature without Christ; without the light of knowledge, without the light of comfort, ready to be swallowed vp in the darknesse of eternall death. The right vnderstanding of this point, when it workes to the humbling of the soule, is the very first step to happinesse, and the first fruits of true godlinesse.

The second thing to be handled in this Text, is the nature of the benefit, which is heere declared in two things: 1. *To giue light: 2. To guide our feet into the way of peace.* Of these two in their course. In discoursing vpon the former, I must shew first, what is meant by *Light*; and then how this *Light is giuen*. The word *Light* is opposed to the former miserie. Whatsoever is vnderstood by *Darknesse and the shadow of death*; the contrarie thereunto is intended by this word *Light*: as namely, *Light of knowledge, Light of comfort, and Light of life.* All these three are meant by the word *Light*, and into the world Christ came to impart these three. First, to giue the *Light of Knowledge*; *I am come into this world, that they which see not, might see*. No man hath seene God at any time, the onely begotten Sonne, &c. hee hath declared him. In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and Knowledge, and of his fulnesse we must all receiue. Secondly, to giue the *Light of comfort*: *The spirit of the Lord is vpon mee,* (the place is meant of Christ) *to giue beautie for ashes, the oyle of ioy for mourning, the garment of gladnesse for the spirit of heauinesse*: And thence commeth that offer made by Christ: *Come vnto mee all that are wearie, &c. and yee shall finde rest for your soules*. Thirdly, to giue the *Light of Life*: *He that followeth me shall not walke in darknesse, but shall haue the Light of Life*. Hee hath brought Life and

^c Psal. 69. 1.
14. 15.

The 4. Doctrine.

^c Ioh. 9. 39.
^a Ioh. 1. 18.
^x Col. 2. 3.
^y Ioh. 1. 16.

^c Isay 61. 1. 3.

^a Matt. 11. 28.
29.

^b Ioh 8. 12.

^c 2. Tim. 1. 10

^d Ioh. 12. 46.

^e Mal. 4. 2.

^f Psal. 19. 8.

^g Matt. 5. 14.

^h Rev. 1. 20.

ⁱ Luc. 11. 52.

^k Luc. 1. 77.

^l Psal. 19. 8.

^m Psal. 119. 50.

ⁿ Act. 5. 20.

^o Psal. 119. 93.

^p Ioh. 16. 13.

^q Act. 16. 14.

^r Luc. 24. 45.

^s Ioh. 14. 26.

^t Psal. 45. 7.

^u Rom. 8. 2.

Immortalitie to Light by the Gospell ^c. And thus is that fulfilled which Christ spake: *Whosoever beleueth in mee shall not abide in darknesse* ^d; neither in the darknesse of Ignorance, nor in the darknesse of discomfort, nor in the darknesse of eternall death.

Now for the maner and meanes of imparting this *Light*. Hee who is the *Sunne of Righteousnesse* ^e, conueieth the beames of this *Light* by two instruments: 1. The Word. 2. The Spirit. To assure vs that the Word is the Instrument to conuey the *Light of Knowledge*, it is said, to *giue Light to the eies* ^f; and the Ministrie of it, is called the *Light of the World* ^g; the Ministers themselues, are said to bee *Starres in Christs right hand* ^h, they haue committed vnto them, the *Key of Knowledge* ⁱ, and it is their office, to *giue Knowledge* ^k. Againe, that we may know the Word to be the Instrument of comfort, it is said to *reioice the Heart* ^l, and to be a *Comfort in trouble* ^m. Thirdly, to certifie vs, that it is the Instrument of Life, it is called the *Word of Life* ⁿ, and a *quickning Word* ^o. Touching the Spirit, asmuch is testified also. By it God giues Knowledge. It is the *Spirit of Truth, and leadeth into truth* ^p. The worke thereof is called the *opening of the Heart* ^q, and the *opening of the vnderstanding* ^r. Secondly, by it commeth Comfort; therefore he is called the *Comforter* ^s, and *The oyle of gladnesse* ^t. Thirdly, by it commeth Life, for which cause it is called *The spirit of Life* ^u. Thus we see, Christ the *Day-spring*, for what end he came, euen to *giue Light*, namely, the *Light of Knowledge*, the *Light of comfort*, and the *Light of Life*: We vnderstand also, how he sendeth forth these his beames vpon vs: Outwardly, by the brightnesse of his Word: Inwardly, by the shining of his Spirit.

The 1. Use.

^x Luc. 2. 10.

^y Gen. 45. 27.

The first vse is, to make the tidings of the Gospell, to be (as in their owne nature they are) *tidings vnto vs of great ioy* ^x: They should bee as the newes of *Iosephs* life to *Iacob*, at the hearing whereof his *Spirit reuiued* ^y. But

why

why so? The substance of the Gospell is Christ Iesus, and the summe of his office is to *giue Light*: What one thing is there in the world more comfortable? When *Paul* and the rest were in danger of shipwracke, *they wished* (saith the text) *that the day were come*^a. The darknesse of the night added to their danger, and doubled their feare: Euerie houre seemed two, vntill the day were broken. Indeed that saying is true of euill doers: *The morning is to them as the shadow of the death*^a: but to them of honest cariage, the light of the day is exceeding welcome. Therefore *Dauid* setteth foorth his longing after God, by the *watching of the morning watch for the morning*^b. It is said of *Abraham* that hee *reioyced to see Christs day*^c: A little glimpse of this light was the very ioy of *Abrahams* heart. How great therefore and intolerable is our dulnesse, who take no contentment in the beames of this *Light*, which shine vnto vs? A great blessing it is, which is reported of *Zabulon* and *Nephtalim*; *The people which sate in darknesse saw great Light, and to them which sate in the Region and shadow of death light is risen up*^d. Wee (by the goodnesse of God) enioy the like blessing, and yet, in the opinion of the most, it is nothing lesse than a blessing: Men had rather lie wallowing in the darknesse of Ignorance, than open their eies to receiue that light which is offred vnto them by the Gospell. This is that which will bring hell and iudgement vpon this generation, according to that speech of Christ: *This is the condemnation, that light is come into the World, and men loue darknesse rather than light*^e. A maruell it is, that men should reiect such a blessing: But Christ hath told the reason; It is, *because their deeds are euill*. This Light of doctrine discovereth their sinnes, (for it is *Light which maketh all things manifest*^f) it bewrayeth the grossenesse of their courses, and layeth open many a mans hypocrisie, who seemed to himselfe, and was reputed by others, to be such an one as he ought to be. There cannot be a greater vexation to men of corrupt mindes than to be met with in

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their

^a Act. 27. 29.^a Job 24. 17.^b Psal. 130. 6.^c Ioh. 8. 56.^d Matt. 4. 16.^e Ioh. 3. 19.^f Eph. 5. 13.

1. K'n. 21. 20.

* Ioh. 7. 7.

The 2. Use.

* 1. Ioh. 8. 35.

* Mic. 3. 6.

* Luc. 17. 22.

* Rev. 11. 10.

* Ioh. 12. 35.

their sinnes; they cry then with *Abab, Hast thou found me, O mine enemies*? This is the cause that the Light of grace, which wee ought of all other things most to reioice in, is become such a burthen vnto vs; it discovereth that, which we desire by all meanes to keepe close. *The world hates me* (saith our Saviour) *because I testifie of it, that the workes thereof are euill* *. Remember we therefore: Christ is the Light, we are they to whom he offreth Light; he hath sent his word to enlighten vs. If wee reioice not in this Light, but wish rather it were euen blowne out, that wee might sleepe freely in our sinnes, it sheweth vs to be the heires of darknesse, and that the shadow of eternall death must bee our portion.

The second vse standeth thus: Sith Christ, as he is Light himselfe, so, imparts his Light vnto vs by his Word and the Ministerie thereof, we must remember the counsell which Christ giueth: *Walke while ye haue light* *. We have no assurance of the continuance of that Light of the Gospell which we now enjoy. Our sinnes may bring a storme vpon vs, in which *the Sunne shall goe downe over the Prophets, and the day shall be darke ouer them* *. Our vnthankfulnesse and barrennesse in our profession, our lothing of the heavenly *Mannah*, hath deserued this, and more: It is holie wisdom therefore for vs, to take the benefit of the light whiles it yet shineth, lest such a iudgement should come vpon vs, as Christ spake of; namely, that we should *desire to see one of the daies, which we now see and value not, but the shall not see them* *. Perhaps, in the opinion of some this is no iudgement, nay it is the very thing they desire, being like those, who when the Prophets of God were slaine, *reioiced ouer them, and sent gifts one to another* *. But let them heare what Christ saith; *He that walketh in the darke, knoweth not whither he goeth* *. He that iourneith not whiles it is day, at last when he is benighted, hee loseth his way, falleth into the hands of theeues, rusheth into some downe-fall where hee casts away himselfe. Such is the state of men

with-

without the Light of doctrine: They goe, they know not whither; they belecue, they know not what; downe they will be in the pit before they are aware. But (wil some say) will you make vs so blinde and so simple, that wee cannot see the way to heauen without you? I answer with the words of Christ to the Pharisees; *Now yee say, we see, therefore your sinne remaineth* ^a: You which thinke your selues so cunning, there is none so blinde, no bodies case is more desperate.

^a Ioh. 9. 41.

The third vse is taught by the Apostle, in these words, *Walke as the children of Light* ^o: That is, Christ is come into the world to enlighten, his word is preached, to conuey the light of grace into our harts: this is no smal priuilege; behaue your selues therefore agreeably to this mercy, liue as becommeth those whom God hath called into Light. This same thing the same Apostle vrgeth elsewhere: *The night is past* (the time of ignorance is blown ouer) *the day is come* (the Light of grace & knowledge hath appeared) *put on therefore the armour of Light* ^p. Wee may thus vnderstand it: Men that by occasion goe abroad in the night, are not so curious about their attire, thinking that whatsoeuer is amisse, will bee shrouded vnder the mantle of the night: But he who goeth forth at noone day, will be more carefull, that nothing may bee seene contrarie to modestie, contrarie to ciuilitie: So (saith the Apostle) in the daies of your ignorance, happily you might doe such or such things, and because you knew no other, they might (in some sort) be borne withall: but now the case is otherwise: Light hath shined, grace hath appeared, knowledge is preached vnto you, therefore other things are now expected; if you now liue as in times past, your fact cannot be hid, your fault cannot be excused: We see in generall, what the Apostle perswades: That we may more fully conceiue what this is to *Walke in the Light*; let vs heare him opening the same vnto vs: It comprehends vnder it three things: 1. To approoue that which is pleasing to

The 3. Vse.

^o Eph. 5. 8.

^p Rom. 13. 12

^a Eph. 5. 10.

^a ver. 11.

^c Rom. 13. 3.

^a Eph. 5. 4.

^a 1. Ioh. 1. 6.

The 5. Do-
ctrine.

^a Psal. 86. 11.

^c Act. 16. 17.

^a Rom. 3. 17.

^a Pro. 14. 12.

^b Ifay 53. 6.

the Lord ^a, which is reuealed in the Scripture, and is more and more made knowen vnto vs by Preaching. 2. To beware of the *vnfruitfull works of darknesse* ^c, such as *gluttony, drunkennesse, chambering, wantonnesse, strife, enuying* ^c, *filthinesse, foolish talking, &c* ^c. 3. To *Reprooue them*: that is, to carie our selues in that holy and blamelesse maner, that our verie liues, (though we hold our tongues) may be sufficient to lay open and condemne the leaud fashions of the vngodly. This is to *walke as the children of Light*. This is straitly required of those which enioy the Light, but (alas) full slightly it is performed. How common, how shamelesse, and how presumptuous are these vnfruitfull works of darknesse; securitie, contempt of goodnesse, scorne of Religion; Pride, Whoredome and such like? do these agree with that Light which God hath giuen vs? Thinkewe that God hath a part in vs, when these things beare dominion ouer vs? It is vnpossible. *If we say we haue fellowship with God, and walke in darknesse, we lie, and do not truely* ^a. The conclusion is this; Christ is our Light, hee imparteth his beames vnto vs by his Word: If we loue this Light, let vs *walke as the children of Light*. The works of darknesse will bring vs into his power who is the Prince of darknesse, we cannot escape it.

The second part of the Benefit, is, *To guide our feet into the way of peace*. Heere it must first be enquired what is the way of peace. Secondly, it must be prooued that we need a Guide. Thirdly, it must bee iustified that Christ is the Guide. Lastly, it must be shewed, how he doth guide. Of these briefly.

The way of peace, is the way which leadeth vnto eternall happinesse: It is called Gods way ^a, and the way of saluation ^c. That we haue need of a guide, it is plain. The way of peace (by nature) we doe not know ^a: The way which seemeth right vnto vs, the issues thereof are the waies of death ^a. It is a part of our miserie, that we are turned euery one to his owne way ^b. That Christ is the Guide his owne words prooue;

I (saith he) *am the way*^c. Hee goeth before his sheepe, bee leadeth them out^d. Now he guideth euen as he giueth light; By the Word, and by his Spirit: By his Word; *Thy word is a lanterne to my feete, and a light vnto my paths*^e: and the Interpreters of this word are called Guides^f. 2. By his Spirit: *Thy eares shall heare a word behinde thee, saying, This is the way, walke yee in it, &c*^g. The Spirit of truth will lead you into all truth^h. Thus is that verified which Hannah spake in her song, that the Lord keepeth the feet of his saintsⁱ, and (as David saith) doth teach them the way that they shall chuse^k.

We see by this, how foulely wee doe all erre by nature, how apt we be still in matters which concerne our soules to be mistaken, how graciously God hath dealt with vs in prouiding vs a Guide; What should we now learne hereby but this? In all thankfulnessse and humilitie to yeeld our selues vnto his conduct. Hee hath prepared for vs a way by his blond^l, hee hath troden out a path by his owne Example^m, hee hath left vs his Word and the Ministrie thereof, to point out the finger to the right way, and to shew vs what is goodⁿ: To the reuerent vse heereof hee hath promised the assistance and guidance of his spirit: *What should hee haue done more, which hee hath not done*^o? Shall wee now when all things are thus fitted for vs, bee like those spoken of in the Prophet, who when the way was laid out before them, said plainly, *We will not walke therein*^p? God forbid. And indeed, we our selues if we doe consider it, must needs condemne it, that it should be so. Why then is it so? Christ calleth daily vpon vs in his word, while we be traueilling in our owne waies; *Returne yee sonnes of Adam*^q. *Why will yee die, O house of Israel? Causetherefore one another to returne*^r: yet we turne the deafe eare, saying in effect, as they did of old; *The word spoken vnto vs in the name of the Lord, we will not heare*^s. Thus every one turneth to his race^t, and the way of sinners^u is preferred before the way of peace. The word of God calleth vs one way, and we will bee sure

^c Ioh. 14.6.

^d Ioh. 10.3.4.

^e Ps. 119.105.

^f Act. 8.31.

^g Isay 30.21.

^h Ioh. 16.13.

ⁱ 1. Sam. 2.9.

^k Ps. 25.12.

The 1. Vse.

^l Heb. 10.20.

^m Ioh. 13.15.

ⁿ Mic. 6.8.

^o Isay 5.4.

^p Ier. 6.16.

^q Psal. 90.3.

^r Eze. 18.31.

32.

^s Ier. 44.16.

^t Ier. 8.6.

^u Psal. 1.1.

to goe the cleane contrarie. If it were asked of vs, whether we would refuse to follow Christ, wee would all say with one voice, *God forbid we should refuse it*: but when hee offereth his directions to vs in his Word, we will not follow them. Hold wee this then: Christ is the head Guide: His Word and the preaching thereof is the staffe and instrument to conduct vs: if wee refuse that guidance, wee shall neuer finde the way which leadeth vnto peace.

The 2. Use.

Secondly, heere we haue a good direction in the diuersitie and multiplicitie of guides, whom and what to follow. The time-seruer followeth the State and the law: The profane person, the multitude: The worldling his outward quietnesse: The carnall wise man, his owne conceit: The superstitious his forefathers: The papists, the name of the Church. He which would not be deceiued, let him hearken to Christ: His *sheepe heare his voice*²: Christ speaketh in his word. If we will needs follow men, let it be according to that rule: *Be ye followers of me as I am of Christ*¹. Looke who goeth with Christ, that is, who brings his word, him let vs follow: Let vs doe as souldiers do in their watch, demand *The Word*. Thou wilt say; the diuell allegeth the word, as he did to Christ. Truth, but he allegeth it falsly, as he did in his reasoning with Christ. Seeke thou the Lord in humilitie, and in deniall of thy selfe, he will giue thee a discerning spirit, and thou shalt not finally, or fundamentally bee deceiued. *If any man* (saith

*Christ) will doe my Fathers will, hee shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speake it of my selfe*².

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¹ Ioh. 7.17.

Let God alone haue the glory.